

**‘A ffitt place for any Gentleman’?  
GARDENS, GARDENERS AND GARDENING  
IN ENGLAND AND WALES,  
c. 1560-1660**

**by  
JILL FRANCIS**

**A thesis submitted to the  
University of Birmingham  
for the degree of  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

School of History and Cultures  
College of Arts and Law  
University of Birmingham  
July 2011

UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

**University of Birmingham Research Archive**

**e-theses repository**

This unpublished thesis/dissertation is copyright of the author and/or third parties. The intellectual property rights of the author or third parties in respect of this work are as defined by The Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988 or as modified by any successor legislation.

Any use made of information contained in this thesis/dissertation must be in accordance with that legislation and must be properly acknowledged. Further distribution or reproduction in any format is prohibited without the permission of the copyright holder.



## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis sets out to investigate gardens, gardeners and gardening practices in early modern England, from the mid-sixteenth century when the first horticultural manuals appeared in the English language dedicated solely to the ‘Arte’ of gardening, spanning the following century to its establishment as a subject worthy of scientific and intellectual debate by the Royal Society and a leisure pursuit worthy of the genteel. The inherently ephemeral nature of the activity of gardening has resulted thus far in this important aspect of cultural life being often overlooked by historians, but detailed examination of the early gardening manuals together with evidence gleaned from contemporary gentry manuscript collections, maps, plans and drawings has provided rare insight into both the practicalities of gardening during this period as well as into the aspirations of the early modern gardener. By focusing on the ‘ordinary’ gardens of the county gentry rather than the ‘extraordinary’ gardens of the aristocracy and courtly elite, this study seeks to answer such questions as who was gardening, why they were gardening, how they were gardening and how, ultimately, they viewed the spaces they had created, offering a new perspective on the defining of status and identity in early modern society.





***For my Mum***



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Having come to academia somewhat late in life, I have to begin by saying that the last four years have probably been amongst the most fulfilling and rewarding of my life. I feel privileged to have been offered the opportunities that I have and grateful to have been able to make the most of them. Of course, I could not have done this on my own.

I wish to acknowledge first of all the generous funding that I received from the Arts and Humanities Research Council without which I would never even have been able to contemplate undertaking this course of study. Further funding from the AHRC and additional financial assistance from the College of Arts and Law Roberts Training Fund also allowed me a month-long research visit to the Huntington Library in California, an amazing experience which greatly broadened my horizons both within and outside academia.

I would like to thank my friends and colleagues in the History Department at the University of Birmingham and at the Shakespeare Institute Library in Stratford upon Avon for their encouragement, support and apparent interest in what I was doing. I reserve my greatest debt of thanks for my supervisor, Richard Cust, whose insightful advice and guidance has time and time again proved invaluable. The fact that this thesis is now completed stands monument to his help and encouragement.

There is one further group of people without whom this work could ever have been accomplished and that is, of course, my family. I wish to record here my thanks to my Dad, who has unwittingly helped in more ways than he will probably ever know (not least in teaching me the practicalities of gardening from the age of 3 – so he says!), to my Mum who is a constant source of inspiration even though she will never know of my late-flowering intellectual achievements and to my sons, Matthew and Jonathan, who have cheered me on from the sidelines throughout. Last, but absolutely by no means least, I must thank with all my heart my long-suffering husband Manuel, who through his constant love, support and shining example has enabled me to fulfil my aspirations and achieve my ambitions.



## CONTENTS

List of Contents

List of Illustrations

List of Abbreviations

Conventions

<b>Introduction</b>	1
1 Some definitions	4
2 Historiography	10
3 Methodology	17
 <b>1. Gardening Literature c.1558-1660</b>	 29
1.1 ‘The Art of Gardening’: the first gardening books	31
1.2 ‘Profits and Pleasures’ in the early modern garden: the social and cultural context	52
1.2.1 Profit: working for the common good in Elizabethan England	53
1.2.2 Pleasure: ‘honest delight’ in the Jacobean garden	57
1.2.3 The demoralisation of pleasure: John Parkinson’s ‘Garden of Pleasant Flowers’	62
 <b>2. The Elizabethan Garden: Changing Priorities and Practices</b>	 69
 <b>3. Seventeenth-Century Gardens: Widening Horizons</b>	 111
3.1 ‘All being the experience of forty and eight yeares labour’: Continuities in gardening practice	116
3.2 New Aspirations: Changes in gardening practice	151
3.3 ‘A friend, a Booke and a Garden shall for the future, perfectly circumscribe my utmost designs’: the Civil War years and the Interregnum	193
 <b>4. Networks and Exchanges</b>	 231
4.1 ‘Those that re called usually English flowers’: Commercial and non-commercial exchange of native plants	233
4.2 ‘All sorts of Out-landish flowers’: Acquisition, trade and exchange of foreign plants:	255

cont/...

<b>5. Status and Identity in the Early Modern Garden</b>	287
5.1 'The misterie of Gardening': who was gardening in early modern England?	288
5.2 Redefining the Gardener?	298
5.3 Gentlemen gardeners	302
5.4 'A ffitt place for any Gentleman': gardens as symbols of status and identity	309
 <b>Conclusions</b>	 321
 <b>Appendices</b>	
1.1 Bibliography of gardening literature published in English, c.1558-1660	331
1.2 Bibliography of significant related contemporary literature, c.1558-1660	336
2 The Temple Family Papers: a transcript of selected correspondence	339
3 The evidence for knot gardens in early modern England: a reappraisal	385
4 Transcript of Sir Thomas Hanmer's essay on gardening	413
 <b>Bibliography</b>	 419

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1.	Portrait of John Parkinson	3
2.	Frontispiece from Ralph Austen's <i>Treatise on Fruit Trees</i>	6
3.	<i>The House and Gardens of Llanerch, Denbighshire, c. 1662</i>	14
4.	<i>Dunham Massey, c. 1750</i>	16
5.	<i>The Manner of watering a Pumpe in a tubbe</i>	19
6.	Title page of Hyll's <i>Brief and Pleasaunte Treatise, c. 1558</i>	29
7.	Crown Imperial from Parkinson's <i>Paradisi in Sole</i>	65
8.	William Lawson's Form of a Garden	71
9.	<i>A Nobleman's Herber, c. 1485</i>	74
10.	<i>A Herber, c. 1465</i>	75
11.	Wilton, Wiltshire, c. 1565	76
12.	<i>Palazzo et gardini di Tivoli</i>	77
13.	<i>Jardin de Valleri</i>	80
14.	<i>Montargis</i>	80
15.	Detail of the 'Agas' Map of London, c. 1561	81
16.	Detail from the Copperplate Map of London, c. 1557	82
17.	Clothworkers' Hall, Mincing Lane, London	87
18.	Sir Edward Darcy's Garden, 12-14 Billiter Street, London	88
19.	Mr Beastney's garden under the City walls, Monkswell Street	89
20.	Robert Wood's garden, 4-18 Lower East Smithfield, London	89
21.	Detail from <i>The Family of Henry VIII, c. 1545</i>	102
22.	The fountain at Whitehall	103
23.	Detail from the 'Agas' Map of London, showing the fountain in the gardens at St Augustine's Friary	104



24.	Small garden with an arbour and ‘sitters thereunder’	106
25.	<i>View of the Privy Garden at Richmond Palace, c. 1550</i>	108
26.	Title page from John Parkinson’s <i>Paradisi in Sole</i>	115
27.	Nunwell House as it is today	118
28.	Detail from a map of Nunwell, c. 1748	121
29.	Conjectural view of Sir Thomas Temple’s Parlour Garden	125
30.	Detail of the plan of John Evelyn’s garden at Sayes Court, 1653	135
31.	A still from <i>The Gardeners Labyrinth</i>	138
32.	A still from <i>The Countrey Farme</i>	138
33.	<i>Sir Thomas Lucy III and his family, c. 1620</i>	143
34.	<i>La Seigneurie Gardens, Sark</i>	159
35.	Detail from and engraving of Trentham Hall	181
36.	Engraving of Trentham Hall	182
37.	Inigo Jones’ drawing of a fountain for Somerset House	188
38.	Engraving of Ingestre Hall	190
39.	Plan of Sayes Court by John Evelyn, 1653	197
40.	Detail from John Evelyn’s Plan of Sayes Court showing the entrance leading to the house	200
41.	Detail from John Evelyn’s Plan of Sayes Court showing the Oval Garden	201
42.	The garden of Pierre Morin, 1649	203
43.	The Oval Garden at Sayes Court	203
44.	Detail from John Evelyn’s Plan of Sayes Court showing the Grove, the promenade and the island	204
45.	‘A Rude Draght of Wotton Garden’ by John Evelyn, 1640	210
46.	‘Prospect of the old house at Wotton 1640’ by John Evelyn	210

47.	‘Prospect of Wotton Gardens and house: as altred by my Bro: 1646’ by John Evelyn	211
48.	View of Wotton with the garden, grotto and environs	215
49.	Wotton in Surrey as in the yeare 16[.]	215
50.	‘Wotton in Surrey, The house of Geo: Evelyn Esq’, 1653	216
51.	Carnations and gilloflowers from Parkinson’s <i>Paradisi</i>	232
52.	Detail from the ‘Agas’ Map showing Olde Streete, c. 1561	246
53.	Plan of an Estate in Old Street	246
54.	Detail from the Faithorne and Newcourt Map of London, c. 1643	248
55.	Detail from the ‘Agas’ Map of London, showing the Minories And Goodman’s Fields	249
56.	Tulips from Parkinson’s <i>Paradisi in Sole</i>	259
57.	Page from Sir Thomas Hanmer’s Memorandum Book showing plants plants ‘Bought of Moulart 1654’	275
58.	Page from Sir Thomas Hanmer’s Memorandum Book showing plants purchased from ‘Geldrop 1655’	276
59.	Page from Sir Thomas Hanmer’s Memorandum Book showing plants ‘Bought of Dolvine 1654’	278
60.	Auriculas, or Beares eares	283
61.	Illustration from William Lawson, <i>A New Orchard and Garden</i>	287
62.	Portrait of John Parkinson	292
63.	Portrait of John Gerard	292
64.	Portrait of John Tradescant	292
65.	Detail from John Evelyn <i>Instruments Presented to the Eye</i>	300
66.	Portrait of Sir Thomas Wentworth and his family, c. 1575	304
67.	The tombs of Sir John Oglander and his son George	318
68.	Muck spreading in the early modern garden	329

69.	Illustration of an interlacing knot	387
70.	<i>View of the Privy Garden at Richmond Palace</i>	388
71.	<i>The Maner of watering with a Pumpe in a tube</i>	389
72.	<i>Thomas More and family</i> , c. 1593-4	391
73.	Detail from <i>Thomas More and family</i>	392
74.	Detail from the 'Agas' Map of London	393
75.	Detail of Conway Castle, c. 1600	393
76.	Detail from <i>Sir Thomas Lucy III and his family</i> , c. 1620	394
77.	<i>Anne of Denmark</i> , c. 1611-14	395
78.	<i>Unknown Gentleman, Called Henry, Prince of Wales</i> , c. 1620	395
79.	<i>Lady of the Hampden Family</i> , c. 1610-15	395
80.	<i>Arthur, Ist Baron Capel and his family</i> , c. 1641	396
81.	<i>Sir Thomas Lucy and his family</i> , c. 1620	397
82.	<i>Lettice Newdigate, aged two</i> , c. 1606	399
83.	Detail from Hovenden's map of All Souls, Oxford, c. 1586-1605	400
84.	Detail from Ralph Treswell's survey of the Clothworkers' Hall	400
85.	Knot designs from <i>The Gardeners' Labyrinth</i>	401
86.	Detail from map of All Souls, Oxford	401
87.	Detail from <i>Lettice Newdigate</i>	401
88.	<i>A Proper Knotte</i> from <i>The Gardeners Labyrinth</i>	404
89.	Designs for Knots from William Lawson's <i>Country-Houswives Garden</i>	406
90.	'The Knot of Embroidery'	408
91.	'The Compartment of Turff'	409
92.	<i>Hampton Court from the East</i>	411

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BL	British Library, London
BL, Evelyn, Add.	British Library, Evelyn Papers, Additional Manuscripts
BL, Pelham, Add.	British Library, Pelham Papers, Additional Manuscripts
<i>Diary</i>	<i>The Diary of John Evelyn</i> , ed. by E. S. De Beer, 6 Vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955)
Evelyn, <i>Elysium Britannicum</i>	John Evelyn, <i>Elysium Britannicum, or the Royal Gardens in Three Books</i> , ed. by John E. Ingram (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, c.2001)
<i>Garden Book</i>	Thomas Hanmer, <i>The Garden Book of Sir Thomas Hanmer</i> , ‘Now first printed from the MS volume of 1659 under the care of Ivy Elstob’ with an Introduction by Eleanour Sinclair Rohde (London: Gerald Howe, 1933; repr. Mold: Clwyd County Council Library and Information Services, 1991)
Gerard, <i>Herball</i>	John Gerard, <i>The Herball, or General Historie of Plantes</i> (London, 1597)
<i>GH</i>	Garden History (Journal of the Garden History Society)
HL	Huntington Library, California
HL, Temple MSS	Huntington Library, Temple Family Papers, Stowe Archive
<i>HLB</i>	Huntington Library Bulletin
<i>HLQ</i>	Huntington Library Quarterly
HMC	Historical Manuscripts Commission
HMSO	Her Majesties Stationery Office
IOWRO	Isle of Wight Records Office, Newport
IOWRO, OG/AA/	Isle of Wight Records Office, Oglander Commonplace Books

Johnson, *Gerard's Herball*

*The Herball, or General Historie of Plantes*, gathered by John Gerard [...], very much enlarged and amended by Thomas Johnson (London, 1633; repr. 1636)

MS/S                      Manuscript/s

NLW                      National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth

NLW, Bettisfield        National Library of Wales, Bettisfield Estate records and correspondence of the Hanmer family of Bettisfield

*Of Gardens*             Francis Bacon, *Of Gardens* (1625), in *The Genius of the Place: the English Landscape Garden 1620-1820*, ed. by John Dixon Hunt and Peter Willis (London: Paul Elek, 1975; repr. London: MIT Press, 1988), pp. 51-56

RHS Lindley            Royal Horticultural Society Lindley Library, London

SRO                      Staffordshire Records Office, Stafford

SBTRO                  Shakespeare Birthplace Trust Records Office, Stratford upon Avon

Treswell, *Survaye*       London, The Clothworkers' Company, Ralph Treswell, *Survaye of all the Landes and Tenementes belonging to the Worshipfull Company of the Clothworkers of London* (London, 1612)

#### **Online databases:**

*OED Online*            Oxford English Dictionary Online  
<http://www.oed.com.ezproxyd.bham.ac.uk>

*Oxford DNB*            Oxford Dictionary of National Biography  
<http://www.oxforddnb.com>

*ESTC*                    English Short Title Catalogue <http://estc.bl.uk>

## CONVENTIONS

**Dates:** Old style dating has been retained where it appears in manuscript sources, the year beginning on 25<sup>th</sup> March.

**References:** References are based on the format suggested by the MHRA Style Guide (MHRAStyleGuide.pdf (2008), downloaded from [www.mhra.org.uk](http://www.mhra.org.uk)). The first citation of a source includes all details of author, title, edition etc., place of publication, publisher and date of publication. Subsequent references to the source are abbreviated and include the surname of the author and where appropriate, a shortened version of the title.

**Spelling:** Where possible, spelling and punctuation have been reproduced as they appear in original documents, with the exception that modern forms of u/v and i/j have been used and the ‘thorn’ replaced with ‘th’. Your, with, which, that and then have been silently expanded.

### **Transcription conventions:**

Legible deletions in the original are shown struck through.

Illegible deletions in the original are marked as <del>, insertions as /insertion\

Illegible words are indicated by square brackets [?.....], uncertain words also appear in square brackets but with a conjectural reading [?uncertain].

Obvious accidental omissions or obliterations in the original have been added in square brackets.

Numbers appear in Roman and Arabic forms, as they appear in the original



## INTRODUCTION

Although many men must be content with any plat of ground, of what forme or quantity soever it bee, more or lesse, for their Garden, because a more large or convenient cannot bee had to their habitation: Yet I perswade my selfe, that Gentlemen of the better sort and quality, will provide such a parcell of ground to bee laid out for their Garden, and in such convenient manner, as may be fit and answerable to the degree they hold.<sup>1</sup>

These words, from the opening of Chapter 2 of John Parkinson's *Paradisi in Sole, Paradisus Terrestris* (1629) 'The Ordering of the Garden of Pleasure' encapsulate at once the subject of this thesis: an investigation into the gardens, gardeners and gardening practices of the gentlemen of early modern England and they locate Parkinson in a perfect position to act as our commentator. As well as writing this remarkable gardening book for which he is now best known, John Parkinson presents a full list of credentials which establish him as a fitting observer of contemporary gardening practice. First and foremost, he was a gardener himself and his book is full of intensely practical advice based on his own experience of growing and cultivating plants on a large two-acre plot in Long Acre, near Covent Garden in London. He lived for all of his long working life in the city, earning his living as an apothecary. Although plants were the tools of his trade and Parkinson saw the growing of plants as an essential element in the pursuance of his profession, for him, gardening was more than just an extension of his work. He was passionate about plants, revelling in their beauty and growing hundreds of new and exotic varieties in his 'Garden of pleasant and delightful flowers'.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> John Parkinson, *Paradisi in Sole, Paradisus Terrestris: or, A Garden of all Sorts of Pleasant Flowers* (London, 1629; photofacsimile edn, New York: Dover, 1976), p. 3

<sup>2</sup> John N. D. Riddell, 'John Parkinson's Long Acre garden 1600-1650', *Journal of Garden History*, 6:2 (1986), 112-124; Parkinson, *Paradisi*, Epistle to the Reader



He was an important figure on the London gardening scene – he knew John Gerard, gardener to William Cecil; he was a life long friend of John Tradescant, the renowned plant hunter of his age; he was a mentor to young botanists such as John Goodyer and Thomas Johnson; he was ranked by the Flemish botanist Dr Matthias L'Obel as one of the most important gardeners of his time in London and by 1640 he had been appointed to the position of *Botanicus Regius*, Herbalist to King Charles I.<sup>3</sup>

Much about John Parkinson can be seen reflected in his portrait that appears in the front of his book. The text declares him as an apothecary of London. The family coat of arms in the bottom left hand corner of the woodcut, the Latin text, his mode of dress and the shield of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries in the bottom right hand corner all reveal him as a man of learning and some substance, defining his status as both a gentleman and a respected member of his profession. But the portrait also reveals him as a gardener. In his hand he is holding a single flower stem – a Sweet John, or Sweet William as it is now known. Apart from the obvious play on his name, it is significant that this particular plant had no use in 'physycke', but instead was noted for the colour and variety of its flowers.<sup>4</sup> As will be shown, Parkinson not only recommends flowers for the garden purely as objects of beauty and delight - but as demonstrated in the quote at the head of this introduction - a garden in which to show them off as a fitting display of wealth and status.

---

<sup>3</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, pp. 392, 388; R. T. Gunther, *Early British Botanists and their Gardens* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1922), p. 16; Thomas Johnson makes many references to plants he has seen growing in Parkinson's garden in his revised edition of *Gerard's Herball* (London, 1633), see for instance p. 717; Riddell, 'John Parkinson's Long Acre Garden', p. 112; John Parkinson, *Theatrum Botanicum: The Theater of Plants* (London, 1640), Dedication

<sup>4</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 320



**Figure 1 Portrait of John Parkinson**  
from *Paradisi in Sole, Paradisus Terrestris* (1629)

However, in addition to the plethora of gardening advice and his considerable knowledge of plants and flowers being grown in seventeenth-century England, Parkinson also provides a personal commentary on the society in which he lived and worked. He offers his own views on current trends – what people ‘now adais’ are doing in their gardens – some of which he approves and some of which he does not.<sup>5</sup> He despairs over idle and ignorant gardeners who do not know how to deal with the new ‘outlandish’ plants arriving from overseas and untrustworthy nurserymen who do not know their ‘Arch-Dukes’ cherry from their ‘Flanders’.<sup>6</sup> He grapples with moral issues, such as gardeners who presume to control nature, trying to change the colour, scent and form of plants, doing ‘as much as God

---

<sup>5</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, pp. 463, 7

<sup>6</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, pp. 8, 571

himselfe that created them'.<sup>7</sup> And although he purports to be addressing 'most men', his constant references to the gentle status of his readers reflects his own concern with one of the major preoccupations of the age.

Within the pages of this book then, John Parkinson provides one of the most comprehensive overviews of early modern gardening available to us, highlighting precisely the kinds of questions to be taken up in this thesis. What form exactly did a man's 'plat of ground' take and how did that change over the period? Who was working in these gardens? What were they growing? Why were they gardening? How were new ideas about gardens and gardening being disseminated? What part did gardens and gardening play in defining notions of gentility?

## **1. Some definitions**

Before these issues can begin to be addressed however, there are even more fundamental questions to be raised. What exactly is meant by 'a garden', how is the activity of 'gardening' to be defined and who is being called 'a gardener'? Do these terms mean the same to us now as they did in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries? As we have seen, John Parkinson describes a garden as a 'plat' or 'parcell' of ground, but specifies very quickly that in order to protect the herbs, flowers and early fruit, it must be defended against cold winds and frost with brick or stone walls, ideally on one side by the house, or with 'high growne and well spread trees [...] to keepe it the warmer'.<sup>8</sup> Another contemporary garden writer from the sixteenth century, Thomas Hyll, quotes the Roman horticulturalist Columella as observing that once people had been introduced to the

---

<sup>7</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 24

<sup>8</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 1

delights of gardening, ‘they laboured then to become skilfull, and use a greater care about the ordering and apt dressing of Garden plottes, by well fensing and comely furnishing of their groundes, with sundry needefulle & delectable trees, plantes and herbes’.<sup>9</sup> Frank Crisp, in his systematic overview of medieval gardens explains that in the selection of illustrations which form the basis of his book, many were excluded because although they showed flowers growing, ‘they were not enclosed and therefore could not be said to represent a true garden’.<sup>10</sup> In the newly translated editions of the Bible, contemporaries would have read in the book of Genesis that ‘the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it’, but then, the eating of an apple later, ‘the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground’.<sup>11</sup> Adam’s expulsion from the garden implies a defined space from which he was sent to the outside. From these examples, it would seem that the defining characteristics of a garden include the fact that it is an enclosed space, that it will contain cultivated plants, whether fruit, flowers or trees and that it is separate from whatever other activities may be going on outside of its boundaries. It is also noteworthy that once Adam was sent away from the garden, the nature of his work changed from that of a gardener, dressing and keeping the garden, to that of an agricultural labourer, tilling the ground, against which it is set in contrast. This seems reasonably unequivocal, but there are inevitably some terms which blur the boundaries.

One in particular is orchards, an apparently ubiquitous element of all but the smallest of early modern gardens. In 1653, Ralph Austen wrote in his dedicatory epistle to Samuel Hartlib that it would be of great benefit to all ‘If men would plant fruit-trees, not only in

---

<sup>9</sup> Thomas Hyll, *The Gardener’s Labyrinth* (London, 1577), p. 2

<sup>10</sup> Frank Crisp, *Mediaeval Gardens* (London, 1924; repr. New York: Hacker Art Books, 1979), p. 2

<sup>11</sup> *The King James Bible* (1611), Genesis 2.15; Genesis 3.23

Gardens, but also in many of their fields and hedges'.<sup>12</sup> The frontispiece of this book shows an illustration of a totally enclosed garden, planted entirely, apart from a small ornamental bed in the centre, with fruit trees.

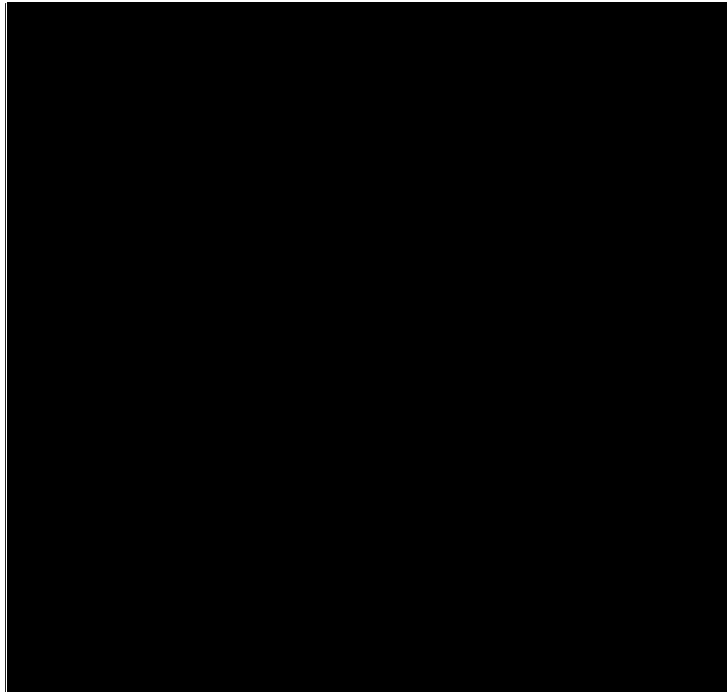


Figure 2 Frontispiece from Ralph Austen's *Treatise on Fruit Trees* (1653)

William Lawson, another contemporary garden writer, uses the terms orchard and garden almost interchangeably. His book is primarily concerned with the planting and maintaining of an orchard, including explicit instructions about how it should be 'fenced'.<sup>13</sup> But as well as fruit trees, this area could also include flowers, mounts, walks, mazes and any manner of 'ornaments'. He includes a plan of an ideal garden, in which the orchard areas are

---

<sup>12</sup> Ralph Austen, *A Treatise of Fruit-Trees* (Oxford, 1653)

<sup>13</sup> Unlike Parkinson however, Lawson's main concern is to prevent the fruit being stolen as the neighbours may 'prove theeves': William Lawson, *A New Orchard and Garden [...] with the Country-Houswives Garden* (London, 1618; photofacsimilie edn, Totnes: Prospect Books, 2003), p.12 [46]

definitely within the bounds of the garden walls.<sup>14</sup> It would seem from this that once again what defines an orchard from simply fruit-trees planted in fields is that they are enclosed, therefore making them part of the garden. From other archival evidence it would seem that the pruning and care of fruit trees is the responsibility of the gardener, so for the purposes of this thesis my definition of a garden will include the orchard and following on from this, gardening will refer to any activity relating to the cultivation of plants within these enclosed areas.<sup>15</sup>

Defining the gardener might appear at first sight to be equally straightforward but as the evidence presented in this thesis will show, this was not so. Those calling themselves gardeners could be anyone from the designer of the garden, the owner of the garden or the one who paid for the work to be done through to the skilled gardeners who occupied a prestigious position within a household to labourers who did the hard graft of digging, ditching and manuring. They could be amateurs, professionals or hourly paid workers. An examination of this question will be left for later discussion.

Another group who equally defy simple definition are the ‘gentlemen’ to whom John Parkinson refers and who form the backbone of this study. According to contemporaries, gentlemen could include anyone from the titular nobility – anyone below the monarch – to those ‘that are simply called gentlemen’, or to put the problem more pragmatically: ‘What

---

<sup>14</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, pp.10-11 [44-45]. See **Figure 8**, p. 71 for illustration of Lawson’s plan

<sup>15</sup> *The Oxford English Dictionary* concurs, defining a garden as ‘an enclosed piece of ground devoted to the cultivation of flowers, fruits or vegetables’ and an orchard as ‘Originally: a garden (freq. Enclosed), esp. For herbs and fruit trees. Now: an area of land, freq. Enclosed, given over to the cultivation of fruit trees’ and originating from the Latin *hortus*, meaning garden – ortus/ort + yard: *OED Online*

a gentleman is ‘tis difficult with us to define’.<sup>16</sup> Whilst bearing in mind then Felicity Heal’s conclusion that ‘flexible definitions of gentility were a necessary feature of [...] early modern England’,<sup>17</sup> the gentry under discussion here comprise, not nobles and the aristocracy, but those from county knightly families, such as Sir John Oglander or Sir Thomas Temple, down to include members of the lesser or parish gentry such as William Lawson and Gervase Markham.<sup>18</sup> These gentlemen owned substantial houses and gardens and attended to their own estates. Although the primary function of their gardens was as a necessary element in the successful running of the household economy, it was also, in most cases, both a pleasure and a mark of wealth and status. It is on the owners of these gardens, who Parkinson refers to as ‘Gentlemen of the better sort’, that the focus of this thesis will be concentrated.

This is a study of gardens and gardening during the years c.1560 to c.1660. The beginning of this period coincides with the publication of the first horticultural manuals solely dedicated to the ‘arte’ of gardening, thus securing its place as an activity worthy of consideration in its own right. This thesis traces changes and developments over the

---

<sup>16</sup> Thomas Smith, *De Republica Angorum* (London, 1583), p. 20; William Harrison, *The Description of England* (1587), ed. by Georges Edelen (New York: Dover, 1994), p. 94; John Selden, cited in Felicity Heal and Clive Holmes, *The Gentry in England and Wales, 1500-1700* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 1994), p. 7

<sup>17</sup> Heal and Holmes, *The Gentry in England and Wales*, p. 9

<sup>18</sup> Sir John Oglander inherited his father’s estate on the Isle of Wight in 1609 and was knighted in 1615: Isle of Wight Records Office, Oglander Commonplace Books, OG/AA/14; Andrew Thrush and John Ferris, *The House of Commons 1604-1629*, Vol 5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 511. Sir Thomas Temple, under King James 1, acquired the titles of knight in 1603 and baronet in 1611. Edwin Gay cites the rise of the Temple family from tenant sheep farmers to English landed gentry in the sixteenth century as an example of Tudor social mobility when ‘new men broke through the stratifications of the existing order’: Edwin Gay, ‘The Rise of an English Country Family’, *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 1:4 (1938), 367-390, (pp. 368, 390). Much the same kind of story could be told for the other gentlemen knights who are the subject of this study. William Lawson has been identified as vicar of the Yorkshire parish of Ormesby, a man of some learning and considerable landholding: Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, Introduction by M. Thick, p. 9; Gervase Markham was the younger son of ‘a noble family in decline’, a soldier and active, until the downfall of the Earl of Essex in 1601, on the fringes of the court: Gervase Markham, *The English Housewife*, ed. Michael Best (Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1986), p. xi

following one hundred years to its establishment as a subject worthy of scientific and intellectual debate by the gentlemen of the Royal Society in 1660. The restoration of Charles II in the same year also appears to represent a turning point in garden history recognised by contemporaries and historians alike. John Aubrey noted in his *Natural History of Wiltshire* (written between 1656 and 1691) that ‘in the time of King Charles the Second gardening was much improved and became common’, observing at the same time that the pleasure of gardens was ‘unknown to our great-grandfathers’.<sup>19</sup> A little later, in the early 1700s, Daniel Defoe comments on ‘the strange passion, for fine gardens, which has so commendably possessed the English gentlemen of late years’.<sup>20</sup> Obviously, these are subjective judgements, but nevertheless a shared impression of noticeable changes within the living memory of these writers can be detected. John Harvey, a leading authority on medieval and early modern gardening, frequently cites the Restoration as a significant juncture in garden history, noting that ‘as in so many other departments of life [it] provided a fresh starting-point’.<sup>21</sup> In his recent thesis on the subject, David Marsh begins his overview of gardens in London in 1660, stating that before this time, England ‘had no great pride in gardens, and no identifiable national style’.<sup>22</sup> The second of these statements may prove a sustainable argument, although the first I would suggest does not – nevertheless it adds weight to the idea that there is a perception of a sea-change around this time. So if this is the case, it begs the question of what, therefore, was happening before 1660? It is this period that is the subject of examination in this thesis.

---

<sup>19</sup> Aubrey’s *Natural History of Wiltshire*, intro. by K. G. Ponting (Newton Abbot: David and Charles Reprints, 1969), p. 93

<sup>20</sup> Daniel Defoe, *A Tour Thro’ the Whole Island of Great Britain* (1721-26), cited in David Jacques, ‘Who Knows What a Dutch Garden Is?’, *Garden History*, 30:2 (Winter, 2002), 114-130 (p. 117)

<sup>21</sup> John Harvey, *Early Gardening Catalogues* (London: Phillimore, 1972), p. 7

<sup>22</sup> David Marsh, *The Gardens and Gardeners of later Stuart London*, (Unpublished doctoral thesis, University of London, 2004), *Electronic Thesis Online Service* <http://ethos.bl.uk> [accessed 12.01.10]



## 2. Historiography

Studying early modern gardens in England has its problems, the main one being the paucity of evidence available: there are few gardens left to see and due perhaps to the essentially practical nature of this activity, documentary evidence is scant and what little there is lies mostly buried within archives rarely examined for this kind of data.<sup>23</sup>

Gardening is by its very nature an ephemeral activity and as such, extant gardens are rare and those that have been subject to restoration or reconstruction tend to represent the unusual or exceptional – the gardens of the aristocracy – rather than the commonality of gardens up and down the land. A case in point is the recently recreated Elizabethan garden at Kenilworth Castle which opened to the public in 2010. Not only did this garden belong to one of the most favoured courtiers in the land, Robert Dudley, it is also one he created specifically, with no expense spared, for no less a visitor than the Queen of England. It was so lavish that the contemporary writer, Robert Langham, was moved to write a detailed account of its extravagances and it is mainly upon this evidence that the garden has been reconstructed.<sup>24</sup> However, whilst it is clearly based on meticulous research, it tells us nothing about what an ordinary early modern garden might have looked like and unfortunately, it is using evidence of precisely these kinds of gardens that the story of the history of gardening has thus far been related.<sup>25</sup> If we look for instance at Sir Roy's Strong's seminal work *The Renaissance Garden in England*, or Paula Henderson's later *Tudor House and Garden*, they abound with images showing gardens divided into

---

<sup>23</sup> It is also likely that this is another reason why garden history has thus far concentrated on the post-1660 period when evidence becomes more plentiful.

<sup>24</sup> This letter is transcribed in R. J. P. Kuin, ed., *Robert Langham, A Letter* (Leiden: Brill, 1938)

<sup>25</sup> These arguments were also rehearsed, in relation to the study of eighteenth-century landscapes, by Edward Harwood and Tom Williamson in their contributions to a paper delivered to the Society of Architectural Historians of Great Britain in 2006 and published in 2007: Edward Harwood, Tom Williamson, Michael Leslie and John Dixon Hunt, 'Whither Garden History?', *Studies in the History of Gardens and Designed Landscapes*, 27:2 (2007), 91-112

compartments, with terraces, steps, fountains, ornamented by the intricacies of knot gardens and mazes.<sup>26</sup> We see laid out before us the vast gardens of the Villa d'Este in Italy, the palace gardens at Hampton Court or the fantastic layout of gardens at Wilton House. Because records are still extant for these exceptional gardens, they have been studied and used as examples by a generation of garden historians, fixing in our minds an image of what we think an early modern garden looked like. It must be said that Henderson does widen her remit to include gardens of the lesser aristocracy and that Strong is at pains to point out that his concern is solely with the gardens of the elite, nevertheless it is for the reader to beware of interpreting these as the norm.

Before moving on to discuss what might be closer to 'the norm', it is helpful to review the recent historiography of early modern gardens and gardening as articulated in the growing body of garden histories produced in the last forty years or so. These have undoubtedly laid a valuable groundwork for current and future study, but, as shall be demonstrated, the approach generally taken by the 'first generation' of garden historians has had its limitations. Having noted earlier that it took until 1660 for gardening to be taken seriously as a subject for intellectual debate, it was to be another three hundred years before it became established as a distinct area of academic study, arguably beginning with the formation of the Garden History Society in 1965 and the first publication of its journal *Garden History* in 1972. With very few chairs of garden history established in universities, Michael Leslie observes that 'we're still finding our way [...] carrying our intellectual possessions in supermarket bags', still waiting to occupy an academic home with defined

---

<sup>26</sup> Roy Strong, *The Renaissance Garden in England* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979); Paula Henderson, *The Tudor House and Garden*, (London: Yale University Press, 2005)

boundaries.<sup>27</sup> In the meantime, the subject has been approached from a wide variety of disciplines including art history, literary history, architectural history, landscape architecture and more recently, archaeology. Whilst this interdisciplinary approach must be applauded, it nevertheless has had the effect of confining much of garden history to a theoretical approach, examining aesthetics, iconography, symbols and meaning, but rarely dealing with practical issues. In other words, the concentration has been on the history of *gardens*, and specifically on garden styles, as opposed to the history of *gardening*. The science of horticulture for instance has barely impinged upon garden history at all. One notable exception is the recent work of C. Paul Christianson in his work on the gardens of Thomas More's London, which examines in detail the practicalities of gardening in the early sixteenth century.<sup>28</sup> This thesis will continue this area of investigation through the remainder of that century and into the next, attempting to uncover some detail about what exactly the early modern gardener was doing in his or her garden.

Another difficulty with the traditional approach is that, with the benefit of hindsight, it is very easy to 'pigeonhole' a series of garden styles into neat, chronological phases that have developed out of one another and in response to one another. This inevitably results in an over-simplification that can hide the complexities of what was actually happening on the ground. It has been noted that this traditional methodology has much in common with the history of art and indeed, much of the defining terminology used in garden history is borrowed from art history: renaissance, mannerist, baroque, picturesque, landscape and so

---

<sup>27</sup> Michael Leslie, 'Whither Garden History?', p. 103

<sup>28</sup> C. Paul Christianson, *The Riverside Gardens of Thomas More's London*, (London: Yale University Press, 2005)

on.<sup>29</sup> However, whilst it is undeniable that aesthetics have a place in gardens and gardening, there are a host of other factors which have to be taken into account when trying to determine a gardening ‘style’. Many are mundane and practical – topography, climate, available land, pre-existing gardens, cost, the balance between the utilitarian uses of the gardens and the ornamental aspects – the profits and pleasures of gardens – all have to be considered, as well as the slightly less tangible factors such as what the garden was for, how it reflected the owner’s social standing and how it was intended to be viewed by others. In other words, it is essential to consider the *context* within which a garden was made.

Another problem with established methodology is that it is, in fact, extremely difficult to make distinct divisions between one period and the next. The traditional paradigm of a progression of garden styles was very much based, as we have noted, on the gardens of the aristocracy – royal gardens and those of the court elite such as Hampton Court, Nonsuch Palace, Whitehall, Hatfield House, Theobalds or Wilton House, where no expense was spared to create fantastic gardens to be admired, but not necessarily emulated – for who but the privileged few would have the resources? Just as today, when fashions from the catwalk eventually reach the High Street, watered down, simplified and cheaper, so it must have been with fashions in garden design and practice which took not years, but decades, to filter down through the social strata to the gardens of the lesser gentry. Roy Strong, for instance, traces the history of the Italian Renaissance garden and overlays it onto English garden practices, identifying a time-lag of at least fifty years before this aspect of Renaissance culture arrived in England. But even then, it was only adopted by royalty and

---

<sup>29</sup> Edward Harwood and Tom Williamson, ‘Whither Garden History?’, pp. 92, 97; and see for instance, Strong, *The Renaissance Garden in England*, contents page.

the aristocracy, probably taking as long again to filter down to the houses and gardens of the gentry. He examines the ‘high Renaissance’ garden of early sixteenth century Italy, characterised by a reshaping of the terrain with terraces, retaining walls, flights of steps and balustrading and featuring statues set into niches or made into fountains. He shows how this influenced Cecil’s creation of the garden at Hatfield House one hundred years later and how that in turn influenced later seventeenth-century gardens such as that shown in this painting of the House and Gardens of Llanerch in Denbighshire.<sup>30</sup>



**Figure 3** Artist Unknown, *The House and Gardens of Llanerch, Denbighshire*, c. 1662, from Roy Strong, *The Artist and the Garden* (London, 2000), p. 128

So we see that almost a century and a half has elapsed between the emergence of the Italian Renaissance style and its manifestation in the gardens of the gentry in England and

---

<sup>30</sup> Strong, *The Renaissance Garden in England*, pp. 107-110; for more on the garden Llanerch see Elizabeth Whittle, *The Historic Gardens of Wales* (London: HMSO, 1992), pp. 27-8

Wales. Trying to create a time-line, therefore, to represent English garden styles, becomes an almost impossible task because as David Jacques has noted ‘the range of styles typically represented in any time-slice of a country’s gardens appears more as time-slip between the gardens of the fashionable elite and those older gardens held by the lesser gentry’.<sup>31</sup>

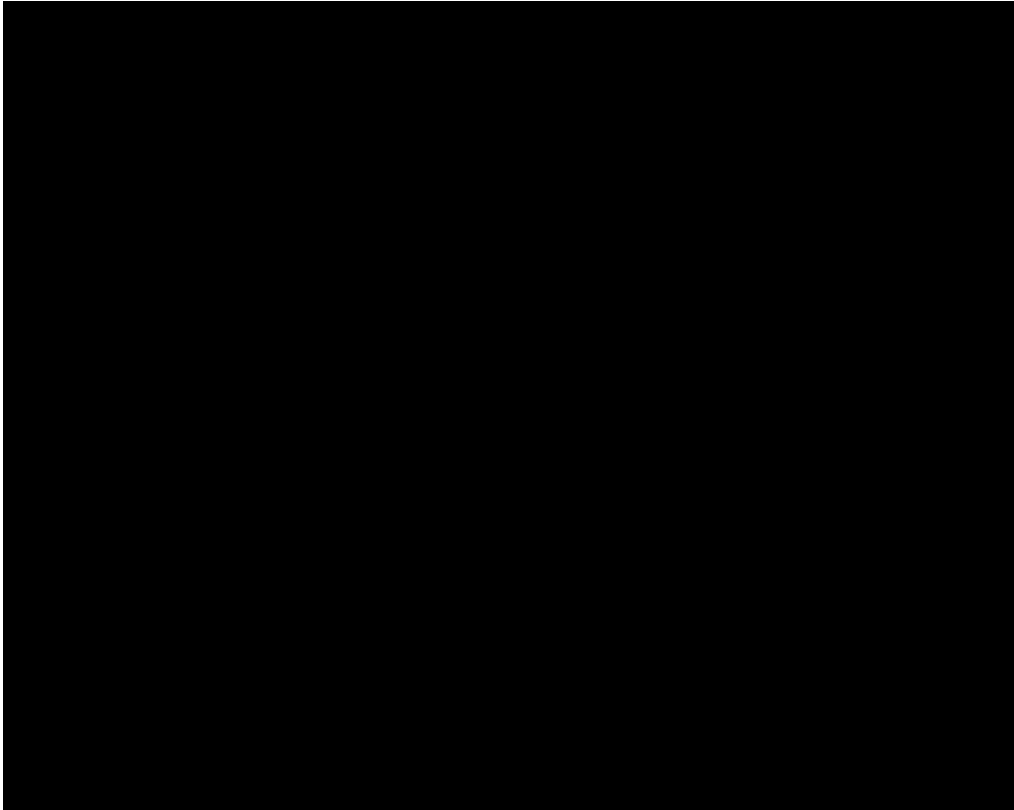
It is also worth remembering that, for most people, the idea of building a new garden from scratch was out of the question – even Sir Richard Leveson who spent a considerable amount of time and money on the rebuilding of the house and gardens at Trentham Hall in Staffordshire in the 1630s was basically remodelling what was already there, reusing materials and existing layouts, but introducing Italianate elements to the garden where possible, for instance with the building of steps and terraces and the addition of a fantastic fountain.<sup>32</sup>

Other gardens illustrate a similar point. A painting of Dunham Massey dating from 1750 reveals a remarkable number of influences from the previous two hundred years in its garden features and layout. Despite the fact that the original house was built in 1616, one of the focal points of the garden is the tiered mount next to the lake, mounts however being a distinctly Elizabethan feature and arguably an inheritance from medieval gardens. Next to the house is a maze and simple knot garden with a fountain and an enclosed garden, divided into individual compartments or squares, all features of late sixteenth and early seventeenth-century gardens. In front of the house, six avenues of trees radiate away in a style reminiscent of the great French gardens of the late seventeenth century, the Dutch style canals would seem to date from the same period whilst the serpentine lake is surely

---

<sup>31</sup> Jacques, ‘Who Knows what a Dutch Garden is?’, p. 125

<sup>32</sup> The building of this garden is discussed in detail in Chapter 3.2



**Figure 4 John Harris, *Dunham Massey*, c. 1750**  
from *The National Trust Magazine* (Autumn 2008), p.41

an eighteenth century addition. The garden is dotted at various points with Italianate ornament such as pillars, gateways, garden buildings and obelisks. There is very little symmetry in the overall design, because, I would suggest, there wasn't one – this slightly more haphazard arrangement is the result of various elements being added to the garden over the years. The point here is that not only was there a 'time-slip' between different gardens during the same period, there was also a time-slip within the gardens themselves.

Finally, it is reasonable to suggest that our view of early modern gardens is skewed by the fact that given the lack of information on ordinary gardens and the predilection of secondary material to concentrate on the ornamental and aesthetic aspects, it is easy to overlook the fact that the primary purpose of any garden – elite or not – was to produce

food to maintain the household. This idea will be explored further in later chapters, suffice to say here that to produce something for purely aesthetic purposes was an indulgence: because there was no obvious material gain, large ornamental gardens were a luxury only to be afforded by the very highest echelons of society.

### **3. Methodology**

From the foregoing then, it would seem that the picture we have of the early modern garden is over-simplified, elitist, untypical and selective. In order to address some of these problems, this thesis aims to extend existing studies by first of all attempting to gain a picture of the generality of gardens up and down the land, looking at the ‘ordinary’ gardens of the county gentry as opposed to the ‘extraordinary’ gardens of the aristocracy and courtly elite. It will look at a number of contemporaneous gardens in order to establish what, if anything, might have been ‘the norm’ and finally, it will look beyond the gardens themselves in order to uncover what was actually going on within them. To borrow a phrase from Edward Harwood and in answer to his plea for what he considers is now required to further the study of garden history, this thesis will do some ‘serious digging among the garden beds’ to try and discover what was actually happening on the ground in the gardens of early modern England.<sup>33</sup>

In order to proceed therefore, rather than working ‘within the framework of the old, tired paradigms’<sup>34</sup> and trying to shoe-horn gardens into a series of progressional styles we should start, as it were, at the other end: looking at actual gardens and the contexts within which they were created to try and understand why they were fashioned as they were. In

---

<sup>33</sup> Harwood, ‘Whither Garden History?’, p. 96

<sup>34</sup> Williams, ‘Whither Garden History?’, p. 97



order to do this, a variety of primary sources will be examined including contemporary gardening literature, diaries, correspondence, household accounts and other scraps of information from gentry manuscript collections together with contemporary paintings, drawings, maps and plans.

A major primary source for this study is the range of contemporary practical gardening manuals which began to appear during the period. The first gardening book to be written in English, Thomas Hyll's *Briefe and Pleasaunte Treatise teachynge how to dresse, sowe and set a Garden* was published in 1558. During the following century approximately twenty such books were produced, although many of them appeared in numerous editions and reprints. They essentially took the form of 'how-to' manuals, and as such offer a valuable insight into the activity of gardening in early modern England, reflecting continuities and changes in both contemporary practice and contemporary attitudes to gardening throughout the period. Further to this, they also reveal, either implicitly or explicitly, a great deal about the concerns of the society within which they were written. From the outset, a link between the language of the books and the cultural ideals and discourses of the time is established. For instance, the ubiquitous rhetoric of an ordered and hierarchical society which pervaded every aspect of the Tudor world was demonstrated, as well as anywhere else, in gardens and writing about gardens. Thomas Hyll 'teacheth the skilful ordering of the garden', Reynolde Scot describes 'The Reformation of a Disordered Garden' and Gervase Markham urges the necessity 'for keeping the earth in order, which else would grow wilde' in order to avoid a 'Chaos of confusendness'.<sup>35</sup> At the same time, the gardens themselves reveal

---

<sup>35</sup> Thomas Hyll, *The Profitable Art of Gardening, now the third time set forth* (London, 1579), sig. Ci; Reynolde Scot, *A Perfite Platforme of a Hoppe Garden* (London, 1574), p. 50; Gervase Markham, *The English Husbandman: The First Part* (London, 1613), sig. A3<sup>v</sup>

that order in their enclosed symmetry of straight lines and geometric shapes, clearly indicated in the simple woodcut drawings which illustrated the garden manuals.



**Figure 5 *The Maner of watering a Pumpe in a tubbe***

Illustration ubiquitously reproduced in contemporary garden manuals, here taken from Thomas Hyll, *The Gardeners' Labyrinth* (1577), p. 53

However, whilst this literature provides an invaluable starting point for examining the practices and aspirations of the early modern gardener, it is necessary at the same time to recognise its limitations as a source of evidence. A number of historians have used contemporary gardening manuals as a basis for their analysis of early modern gardens and garden practices, but this can result in a somewhat one-sided view.<sup>36</sup> It must be remembered that the advice and information contained within their pages will always be

---

<sup>36</sup> For instance, Judith Roberts uses Lawson's *New Orchard and Garden* (1618) and Markham's *English Husbandman* (London, 1613) as a basis for her analysis of gentry gardens in the late Tudor period: Roberts, 'The Gardens of the Gentry in the Late Tudor Period', *GH*, 27:1 (1999), 89-108; Jennifer Munroe examines these garden manuals to discuss issues of gender and class in the early modern garden: Munroe, 'Gender, Class, and the Art of Gardening: Gardening manuals in early modern England', *Prose Studies*, 28:2 (2006), 197-210

prescriptive rather than descriptive, thus reflecting ambition rather than actuality and, as Anna Bryson points out in her similar discussion of contemporary courtesy literature, it is not always easy for the historian to judge the distance between the ideal and actual practice.<sup>37</sup> In the same way that lavishly illustrated ‘coffee-table’ books today offer a glorious picture of how the perfect garden could look, but which in fact bear little resemblance to the plot that all but the most avid of gardeners attempt to cultivate, we must be aware of the possibility that early modern texts similarly represented the ideal rather than the reality. However, by supplementing the evidence from the books with a variety of other documentary sources as mentioned above, this thesis aims to relate the advice in the books to actual gardening practice to discover what ‘real’ gardeners were doing in ‘real’ gardens at this time. These printed sources will form the focus of Chapter 1, which provides not only an introduction to the gardening literature of the period, but also an overview of the moral and intellectual movements of the time, thus providing the broader social context within which the evidence presented in this thesis can be placed.

Gardening literature continues to underpin the next two chapters which examine a variety of documentary sources which shed new light on both gardens and gardening in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Chapter 2 focuses on sixteenth century gardens. It builds on the seminal work of Roy Strong, which despite its concentration on extravagant showpiece gardens of the elite still has to be a starting point for any study of English gardens of this period, as well as the more recent work of Paula Henderson, David Jacques and C. Paul Christianson. Using a range of disparate evidence, it is possible to piece together a picture of what an Elizabethan gentleman’s garden may have looked like.

---

<sup>37</sup> Anna Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 6

At the same time, this period is identified as one which was beginning to see signs of change.

Chapter 3 continues to explore continuities, changes and developments into the seventeenth century, a task greatly aided by the availability of a significantly increased body of documentary evidence. In particular, the examination of a range of gentry manuscript collections provides fascinating, if fragmentary, new facets of information that considerably enhance our picture of gardens and gardeners of the period. Although often little more than a frustrating entry for ‘worke in the garden’, on occasions more detail is found to add flesh to the bones of our scanty knowledge. We learn, for instance, more about the use of gardens, about how plants were obtained and the equipment used by gardeners to grow them. We learn more about the use of ornament in the garden as well as indications of the place of gardens of pleasure and their varied significance to the individuals encountered in these documents. There are tantalising mentions of trees being transported from London, windows being glazed in the orchard and the colouring of seats and fountains. What makes these documentary sources particularly valuable for this study is that, unlike much of the evidence previously utilised by garden historians of this period, these do not represent aristocratic households or the gardens of elite courtiers, but instead offer contemporary and complimentary evidence of gardens and gardening in county gentry households. The different kinds of evidence found within these documents means that, taken together, it is possible to build a reasonably rounded picture of various aspects of gardens and gardening practices at this time.

It should be noted that a number of recent case studies have concentrated on particular gardens which have used precisely this kind of evidence, but they tend to look at specific gardens in isolation, without necessarily placing them in any wider context.<sup>38</sup> This thesis aims to broaden that view, by looking at a range of gardens across the country, comparing and contrasting evidence from a variety of sources, in order to build a picture of, if such a thing existed, the generality of gardens. The manuscripts examined cover a wide geographical area, from Devon to Yorkshire, from Wales to Hertfordshire and documents include detailed and not so detailed household accounts as well as more personal memorandum books and correspondence. Documents and archives relating to six gentlemen and their gardens have proved particularly valuable and form the focus of this third chapter. These include the six commonplace books of Sir John Oglander, probably best known now as a diarist and commentator on the society in which he lived, who owned and managed his estate at Nunwell on the Isle of Wight. These memoranda include copious ‘Observations’ on a wide variety of subjects from the tumultuous political events of the time to practical advice on how to run the estate.<sup>39</sup> Of particular interest are a number of detailed references to the gardens at Nunwell.<sup>40</sup> Many of these references have been transcribed and published by Francis Bamford in ‘*A Royalist’s Notebook*’ (1936), which still remains the most frequently cited source for evidence of Oglander’s gardening interests.<sup>41</sup> However, examination of the original documents has revealed inaccuracies in

---

<sup>38</sup> See for instance Jan Woudstra and Sally O’Halloran, ‘Sir John Reresby’s Garden Notebook and Garden (1633-44) at Thrybergh, Yorkshire’, *GH*, 36:1 (2008), 135-192; John Phillips and Nicholas Burnett ‘The Chronology and Layout of Francis Carew’s Garden at Beddington, Surrey’, *GH* 33:2 (2005), 155-188

<sup>39</sup> For instance, his ‘Observations in Howsbanderie’: Isle of Wight Record Office, OG/AA/28

<sup>40</sup> IOWRO, OG/AA/26-31

<sup>41</sup> Francis Bamford, *A Royalist’s Notebook: The Commonplace Book of Sir John Oglander* (London: Constable, 1936)

transcription, which although apparently minor can unwittingly mask the true picture.<sup>42</sup> In addition, editorial decisions have resulted in phrases, sentences and observations being taken out of context and then juxtaposed with other similar comments to form whole new paragraphs composed by the editor rather than the original author. Examination of the original manuscript documents has therefore proved particularly valuable.

A contemporaneous source of previously unexplored evidence is found in papers relating to Sir Thomas Temple's garden at Burton Dassett in Warwickshire.<sup>43</sup> In 1624, Sir Thomas handed over the running of the family estate at Stow to his son Sir Peter and left the home in which he had lived since his childhood for good.<sup>44</sup> He retired to live with his daughter and son-in-law at their home at Wolverton in north Buckinghamshire, where he re-established his links with the nearby house at Burton Dassett in Warwickshire, the house in which he had been born and where, it appears, he spent much of his declining years.<sup>45</sup> He became less concerned with managing his estates, and instead increasingly engaged with the garden at Dassett. That we know anything at all about this garden is due to the existence of a remarkably comprehensive body of letters, thus far overlooked by garden historians, written during a period of just over three years between 1630-34, from Sir Thomas to his estate steward, Harry Rose, who managed the house and land at Burton Dassett in Sir Thomas' absence.<sup>46</sup> The information in these letters is backed up by notes in

---

<sup>42</sup> For instance, Sir John comments that he has spent 10s[hillings] a root on flowers for his garden – a considerable sum of money to spend on one plant – but this has been transcribed and perpetuated in secondary sources as 10d[pence], an amount which is hardly worthy of comment.

<sup>43</sup> California, Huntington Library, Temple Family Papers. Transcripts of selected items from this archive appear as Appendix 2.

<sup>44</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT CL&I Box 1, Inventory 16<sup>th</sup> October 1624: 'A booke of sundry parcells of household stuff Beddinge, victuals, etc. Leaft by Sir Thomas and the Lady Temple at Stow when Sir Peter began housekeeping there, & Sr Thomas departed thence'

<sup>45</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2308-2337; STT2143-2155; STT2276-2302: the majority of these letters written by Sir Thomas Temple between 1629 and 1634 were sent from either Wolverton or Burton Dassett.

<sup>46</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2143 (13 December 1630) to STT2302 (19 March 1634)

a detailed memorandum book kept by Sir Thomas and also a letter written to Richard the gardener who was to carry out the work on the new garden. This archive offers an extremely rare insight not only into the garden itself, but also the activities of an amateur gentleman gardener of this period.

Two further gentry gardens for which we have more limited, but still extremely useful evidence in the form of account book entries, are those of Sir Thomas Pelham of Halland in Sussex and Sir Richard Leveson of Trentham Hall in Staffordshire. In the case of Pelham, household accounts kept by the steward, John Vine, provide information regarding monies disbursed on work in the garden, thereby giving an insight into the kinds of tasks being undertaken and by whom.<sup>47</sup> In contrast to Oglander and Temple, there is no indication that Sir Thomas was especially interested in his garden or gardening, but clearly, like all gardens, it had to be maintained for subsistence purposes as well as, in this instance it would seem, for show. According to his biographer, ‘ostentation came easily’ to Sir Thomas, so to find references in the accounts for ornamental features for the ‘great garden’ comes as no surprise, but details are scant.<sup>48</sup> However, for a much more comprehensive account of the laying out of a fashionable garden by a member of the rural gentry, the accounts relating to the rebuilding of the house and gardens at Trentham Hall in the early 1630s are very revealing. Again, although there is little evidence that Sir Richard was especially interested in gardening, the garden commissioned for the new mansion at Trentham contained many fashionable features.<sup>49</sup> Evidence relating to these four gardens,

---

<sup>47</sup> London, British Library, Pelham Papers, Add. 33145, 33147

<sup>48</sup> Anthony Fletcher, *A County Community in Peace and War: Sussex 1600-1660* (London: Longman, 1975), p. 43

<sup>49</sup> Staffordshire Record Office, D593/R/1/2 *Moneys dysbursed about the building at Trentham, 1633-38*. I am grateful to Helen Smith for drawing my attention to the material contained in this manuscript.

together with the contemporary literature, will thus form the basis of the first two sections of this chapter.

The last section of Chapter 3 represents the final two decades of our period, both looking back over the preceding century and forward to the post-Restoration era. The story of this period is told firstly through the manuscripts, correspondence and memorandum books of Sir Thomas Hanmer who famously gardened at Bettisfield in North Wales, but who also created and maintained gardens in the 1650s at his mother's home in nearby Haughton and at his home in Lewisham near London. Hanmer is well-known for producing the manuscript for *The Garden Book*, finally published in 1933, but study of his much lesser known notebooks has proved especially insightful for this study.<sup>50</sup> Finally, attention will focus on a consideration of the work of Hanmer's friend and correspondent, the diarist and gardener John Evelyn. During his long life, Evelyn produced a voluminous body of work that has assured his place as one of the most ubiquitous figures in garden history – any book on the subject is bound to mention him somewhere within its pages. However, given that the majority of his life and work fall outside the period of this study, discussion will be confined to his contribution to garden writing and his gardening activities during the early years of this life, concentrating in particular on the maps, plans and correspondence surrounding the creation of gardens at the family home in Wotton belonging to his elder brother George in the 1640s and at his own home at Sayes Court in Deptford in 1653.<sup>51</sup> Chapters 2 and 3 then deal with what was happening, changing and developing in the gardens of early modern England. Chapter 4 focuses on some of the reasons why these

---

<sup>50</sup> Thomas Hanmer, *The Garden Book of Sir Thomas Hanmer*, 'Now first printed from the MS volume of 1659 under the care of Ivy Elstob' with an Introduction by Eleanour Sinclair Rohde (London: Gerard Howe, 1933; repr. Mold: Clwyd County Council Library and Information Service, 1991); National Library of Wales, Bettisfield Estate records, 1663; 1666; 1667.

<sup>51</sup> London, British Library, Evelyn papers, esp. Add. 78610A-S



changes were occurring and what factors allowed them to take hold. Building on the work of John Harvey, it investigates the development of the commercial nursery trade in England, investigating how plants were moved around, how seeds were traded, how new plants reached the gardens of the gentry up and down the land. Once again, the notebooks of Sir Thomas Hanmer provide new and valuable evidence in this regard, challenging Harvey's conclusion, based on his study of early printed gardening catalogues, that no significant commercial trade developed prior to the Restoration.<sup>52</sup> The chapter also examines how the commercial and non-commercial exchange of plants was inevitably accompanied by a free exchange of knowledge and advice amongst gardeners.

Chapter 5 turns attention to who was working in the gardens of early modern England. Household accounts in particular prove useful in gaining an insight into who, at least, was being paid to work in gardens, what their roles, skills and status were within the household. It also examines, through the careers of men such as John Gerard, John Parkinson and John Tradescant, the 'professionalisation' of the gardener and investigates the possibility that some of the work in the garden was being done by the gentleman owners themselves. Finally, it draws together much of the evidence presented throughout the thesis to explore how over the period in question, gardens became fitting symbols of wealth and status and gardening became an acceptable leisure activity for the gentry.

There is however, one final salutary note to sound: in an area as subjective as gardening and one in which, at a practical level, most elements can be changed relatively easily on a whim, the place of individual taste must not be forgotten. A garden is not like a house,

---

<sup>52</sup> Harvey, *Early Gardening Catalogues*, p. 7

which may stand testament to its builders and owners for centuries. Gardens can be – and often are – different from year to year, reflecting much more short term changes both in planting and structure. So whilst the arrival of a new ‘must-have’ tulip may for some advent the digging of a new bed or the rearranging of an old one to accommodate it, others may prefer old-fashioned roses and gilliflowers to ornament their beds; Francis Bacon advocates leaving plants growing into the paths so that they will be crushed underfoot and release their scents, Parkinson advises wide paths kept clean by weederers; Bacon dislikes knots, topiary and pools in the garden, although all three are clearly still fashionable; John Evelyn’s garden at Sayes Court is an eclectic mix of many influences and styles reflecting his travels around Europe, not necessarily designed into a coherent whole, but included because he likes them. Unless a garden is designed by an ‘outside’ designer, this element of personal taste is always going to be an important factor. Across a void of four hundred years, Robert Sydney sounds this warning to the garden historian: in April 1605, he wrote to his estate steward Thomas Golding:

The little garden, since it is so forewards, may goe on for this  
yeare: if I doe not like it, I can alter it the next.<sup>53</sup>

---

<sup>53</sup>Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on the MSS of Lord De L’isle and Dudley at Penshurst Place*, 6 vols (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1925-66), III, Lord Sydney to Thomas Golding, 3 April 1605, p. 155



## CHAPTER ONE

### GARDENING LITERATURE c.1558-1660

Thomas Hyll's *A Most Brieve and Pleasaunte Treatise teachyng how to dresse, sowe and set a Garden* published c.1558 was the first book written in English to be exclusively dedicated to the subject of gardening.<sup>1</sup> 'The lyke hitherto hath not bin published in the English tongue' Hyll declared, but it is 'nowe Englished by me, for the commoditie of many'.<sup>2</sup>

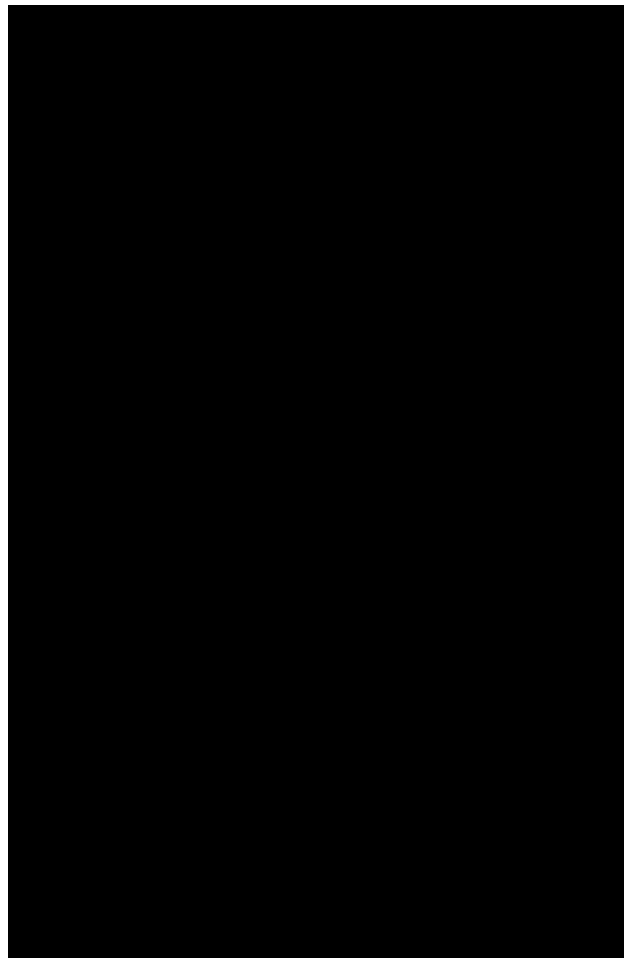


Figure 6 Title Page of Hyll's *Briefe and Pleasaunte Treatise*, c. 1558

---

<sup>1</sup> *English Short Title Catalogue*, S92995

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Hyll, *The Proffitable Arte of Gardening now the third time set forth* (London, 1568), Preface to the Reader. This was a revised edition of his *Briefe and Pleasaunte Treatise*, now with a new title.

Reynolde Scot, who published a book on the subject of hop gardening in 1574, claimed that 'I rather chuse to incurre the daunger of derision in speaking homelye, than the fault of ingratitude in saying nothing' and he will therefore 'write plainly to playne men of the country'.<sup>3</sup> Hyll and his contemporaries clearly viewed the emerging print culture in England as an opportunity to pass on information to a new and growing audience for small and relatively inexpensive books, written in the vernacular. And it seems that by the time Hyll's first gardening book was published, the 'arte of gardening' was acquiring a status of its own: 'Bycause [it] is of it selfe very profitable, and bringeth most necessarie commodities [...] it deserveth no small commendation' he wrote in his dedication to Sir Henrie Seamer in the third incarnation of this book, now retitled *The Proffitable Arte of Gardening*.<sup>4</sup> Gardening, Hyll is saying, is now a subject worthy of a book in its own right.

The aim of this opening chapter is to provide an overview of this new genre of English gardening literature. It will explore both how the nature of the literature itself changed as well as how it reflected changes in gardening practice throughout the period. It will also examine how these books offer insight into the social and cultural concerns of the time, as seen through the gardening authors under discussion. It will cover a range of works, detailed in Appendix 1, from the publication of Thomas Hyll's *Briefe and Pleasaunte Treatise* in 1558 to John Evelyn's first penning of his magnum opus on gardening, the manuscript for *Elysium Britannicum*, initially compiled in the 1650s.

---

<sup>3</sup> Scot, *Perfite Platforme of a Hoppe Garden*, sig. Bii, Bii<sup>v</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Hyll, *The Proffitable Art of Gardening* (1579 edn.), sig. Aii

## 1.1 'The Arte of Gardening': the first gardening books

The first books of horticultural interest began to appear in the sixteenth century, their distribution and popularity aided by the advent of the new print culture which enabled books to be produced and sold relatively cheaply. As well as books concerned specifically with gardening, these also included a significant number of herbals and books on husbandry. At the beginning of the century, copies of classical writings on agriculture, first printed on the Continent, began to appear in England. Influential examples included *Rei Rusticae Scriptores*, a compilation of writings on agriculture by Cato, Varro, Columella and Palladius, published in Venice in 1470 and Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*, or *Of Household* which was translated into English in 1532.<sup>5</sup> These formed the basis of a number of books to be written and published in English, including Fitzherbert's *First Boke of Husbandry* (1534), Thomas Tusser's *One Hundred Points of Good Husbandry* (1557) and Barnaby Googe's translation of Heresbach's *Four Books of Husbandry* (published in Latin in 1570, in English in 1577). However, although these latter two publications included short sections on gardening, their subject is essentially farming and agriculture and as such they will not be included in the contemporary gardening literature to be reviewed here.<sup>6</sup> In the same way, herbals – specifically concerned with the naming of plants and their 'uses' and 'vertues' – which had been composed in manuscript form by scholars and monks for centuries were now being printed and distributed in England. The first examples were in

---

<sup>5</sup> Joan Thirsk, 'Making a Fresh Start: Sixteenth Century Agriculture and the Classical Inspiration' in *Culture and Cultivation in Early Modern England*, ed. by Michael Leslie and Timothy Raylor (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), pp. 15-34 (pp. 18-19)

<sup>6</sup> Both these authors see the garden as the responsibility of the housewife rather than the husbandman. In his *Points*, Tusser provides 'A Digression from Husbandrie: To a Poynt or two of Huswifrie' with advice on setting and sowing the garden: Thomas Tusser, *A Hundred Good points of Husbandry* (1557) in *The English Garden: Literary Sources and Documents*, ed. by Michael Charlesworth, 3 vols (Robertsbridge: Helm, 1993), I, p. 92. Heresbach also deals with gardening as a brief digression directed towards the housewife 'for unto her belonged the charge thereof': Heresbach, Conrad, *Foure Bookes of Husbandry*, Newly Englished and increased by Barnaby Googe (London, 1577; photofacsimile edn, New York: Da Capo Press, 1971), p. 48

Latin, with William Turner's *New Herbal* (1551) being the first to be published in the English language. All these herbals followed the same generic structure and although those that followed claimed to be amplified and improved, undoubtedly in no small part due to the gradual introduction over the century of new plants from abroad, they really were just larger volumes offering more of the same. The end of the century saw the publication of John Gerard's immensely popular *The Herball, or Generall Historie of Plantes* (1597), which was reprinted, substantially updated and improved by Thomas Johnson in 1633, once again proving so popular that it was reprinted as soon as 1636. This was only surpassed by the publication of John Parkinson's *Theatrum Botanicum* in 1640, probably the most detailed and accurate herbal ever printed in English which was to hold its place as a textbook for doctors and apothecaries for over a hundred years.<sup>7</sup> However as indicated here, herbals, concerned as they were with the uses of plants, were far more likely to have been read by medical practitioners and cooks than gardeners, as they offered little in the way of practical instruction on how to actually grow them. So although these works of Gerard, Johnson and Parkinson will be referred to as significant horticultural publications during the period under question, in order to uncover any detail of gardening activities in early modern England, it is the gardening manuals, specifically concerned with the practicalities of how to cultivate a garden in order to grow vegetables and flowers for use in the household, that will form the focus of this study.

As can be seen from Appendix 1, after Hyll's initial treatise, six new gardening books were written and published in the remainder of the sixteenth century and about twice that

---

<sup>7</sup> Anna Parkinson, *Nature's Alchemist: John Parkinson Herbalist to Charles I* (London: Frances Lincoln, 2007), p. 288

number by 1660.<sup>8</sup> The first significant feature of note is that all the titles in this new genre are in English, implying a wider readership of such material than the educated gentleman who may have read the classical works referred to above, and raising the interesting question as to whom, exactly, these books were being aimed. The authors themselves offer some clues: Leonard Mascall, for instance, addresses both the ‘Poore man’ and the ‘riche’ in his opening ‘Booke unto the Reader’, as does Reynolde Scot, who also includes ‘the learned’ and ‘the unlearned’, helpfully providing illustrations to assist the understanding of ‘him who cannot read at all’.<sup>9</sup> However, possibly a more reliable guide to both the potential readership and the popularity of these books includes factors such as the content, the format, the price and the number of editions and reprints to which a publication might run.

It is undeniable that printing dramatically accelerated the distribution of information in the vernacular and as John Barnard has argued, this was particularly so in England. Whilst its geographical position meant that Britain was somewhat cut off from the mainstream Continental book trade, its necessarily more parochial outlook and narrower market offered native writers greater opportunities for publishing works in the English language.<sup>10</sup> Lynette Hunter has noted that the kind of subjects covered in many of these publications can be compared to that which might be found in popular magazines today: household matters including cooking, sewing, family medicine and gardening, as well as a plethora of books

---

<sup>8</sup> Appendix 1.1: Bibliography of Gardening Literature published in English, c. 1558-1660 and Appendix 1.2: Bibliography of significant related Contemporary Literature, c. 1558-1660

<sup>9</sup> Leonard Mascall, *A Booke of the Arte and maner, howe to plant and graffe*, (London, 1572), sig. A<sup>v</sup>; Scot, *Perfite Platforme of a Hoppe Garden*, sigs. Bii<sup>v</sup>, Biii<sup>v</sup>. For more on the question of literacy see Tessa Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 7. Also David Cressy, *Literacy and the Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor and Stuart England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980) for estimated figures on literacy.

<sup>10</sup> John Barnard and D. F. McKenzie, eds, *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, Vol. 4, 1567-1695* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 1



on the subject of personal behaviour. And in the same way that magazines offer a window into ‘how the other half lives’, these publications were appealing to those who aspired to raise their status, by offering both practical advice on how to achieve that as well as providing insight into a way of living which was desirable because people with status already lived that way.<sup>11</sup> William Lawson’s 1618 publication, *A New Orchard and Garden*, provides an excellent example of this. Lawson devotes the first chapter of his intensely practical book to advice on how to employ the right gardener, but concludes: ‘If you be not able, nor willing to hire a gardener, keep your profits to yourself, but then you must take all the pains: and for that purpose... to instruct you, have I undertaken these labours, and gathered these rules’.<sup>12</sup> His book is apparently addressed to the householder who would garden rather than the gardener by trade, indicating that gardening, as well as reading about gardening, was becoming established as an acceptable activity for a new ‘middling’ group, those who aspired to call themselves gentlemen, who were turning to these books for just such instruction.<sup>13</sup>

Many of the gardening books to be examined here were small, plain, octavo volumes, about the size of a modern-day paperback, that could be cheaply reproduced.<sup>14</sup> They ran to a hundred or so pages and as such they would have been accessible both to the practical gardener, in that they could be easily carried around, as well as to the less wealthy, as the price may well have been within their reach. According to F. R. Johnson’s useful ‘Notes on

---

<sup>11</sup> Lynette Hunter, ‘Books for daily life: household, husbandry, behaviour’ in *The Cambridge History of the Book*, ed. by Barnard, pp. 514-30 (pp. 512-16)

<sup>12</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, pp. 1-2[35]-[36]

<sup>13</sup> For more on ‘the middling sort’, see Jonathan Barry and Christopher Brooks, eds, *The Middling Sort of People: culture, society and politics in England, 1550-1800* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1994). It is interesting to note that now, in contrast to the husbandry manuals referred to earlier, gardening is no longer dismissed as a female activity.

<sup>14</sup> Original editions from the Royal Horticultural Society Lindley Library and the British Library were a major resource for this study.

English Retail Book-prices, 1550-1640' compiled from contemporary sources, an unbound copy of Leonard Mascall's *How to Plant and Graffe* was sold in 1575 by the Edinburgh bookseller Thomas Bassandyne for 4d (although he indicates that this is below the average price of 1/2d per sheet for a new book at this time); and an unbound copy of Thomas Hyll's *The Gardeners Labyrinth* was sold in 1578 for 1s 8d.<sup>15</sup> However, not all works of gardening literature fell into this category of cheap and accessible print, the outstanding exception being John Parkinson's much more weighty, illustrated folio volume *Paradisi in Sole, Paradisus Terrestris* published in 1629. This book runs to a total of 628 folio pages including two indexes and is illustrated throughout with many full-page woodcuts. Although it has not been possible to ascertain a price for Parkinson's *Paradisi*, it is known that a copy of his herbal, *Theatrum Botanicum* was purchased on 24 August 1640 by John Goodyear for 36s plus 3s for binding and Johnson notes that a revised edition of Gerard's *Herball* was purchased in 1633 for 48s. In a letter to his son, dated 12 March 1633, William Trumbell complained that he had been offered a copy of Gerard's *Herball* by Mr Bourne the Stationer, for '2li 4s', but he considered this 'a price too greate'.<sup>16</sup> Although these two herbals ran to twice as many pages as *Paradisi in Sole*, this still gives a good indication of the far greater price commanded for these more lavish volumes.

However, as well as being considerably more expensive, *Paradisi in Sole* also stands out from its predecessors as a new kind of gardening book: it is more than just a practical manual, although Parkinson will 'play the Gardiner' and offers much practical advice on

---

<sup>15</sup> F. R. Johnson, 'Notes on English Retail Book Prices', *The Library*, 5<sup>th</sup> Series, 5 (1950), 83-178 (pp. 104, 106)

<sup>16</sup> Anna Parkinson, *Nature's Alchemist*, p. 271; Johnson, 'English Retail Book Prices', p. 102; Sonia Anderson 'The Elder William Trumbull: A Biographical Sketch', *British Library Journal*, 19 (1993), 115-132. Although these publications span a period of over fifty years, it is still valid to make a comparison between them because, as Johnson points out (p. 93), from 1560 to 1635 book prices remained remarkably constant.

how to grow the flowers and tend the garden, and it is more than just a herbal, although it contains descriptions of many ‘beautiful flower plants’.<sup>17</sup> Parkinson clearly had a different reader, and gardener, in mind. Whilst Hyll’s *Briefe and Pleasaunte Treatise* can rightly take its place as the first gardening book to be written in English, *Paradisi in Sole* represents a pinnacle in horticultural writing in that it is the first gardening book aimed specifically, despite his occasional nod in the direction of ‘most men’, at the wealthy gentleman and gentlewoman. The range of gardening literature available by this time then reveals both the subject and the activity of gardening as worthy of the attention of gardeners across the social strata.

As already discussed in the Introduction, using this kind of literature as a guide to actual practice has its limitations: that it is prescriptive rather than descriptive, that it represents aspirations rather than reality are two significant factors which must constantly be borne in mind. One further limitation however, and one which represents a particular problem when it comes to gardening literature, arises from the fact that much of the material in print was, in one way or another, derivative.<sup>18</sup> As already mentioned, the classical texts of the Greeks and Romans formed the basis of the intellectual humanist legacy of the period and to compile works from known sources was perfectly acceptable, so it is therefore perhaps not surprising to find that the first English gardening books relied heavily on both the received wisdom of the ancients as well as contemporary Dutch and French Renaissance writers.<sup>19</sup> In 1572, Leonard Mascall declared ‘I have taken out of diverse authors this simple work into our Englishe tongue’ although in fact the greater part of the book is simply a

---

<sup>17</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, Epistle to the Reader.

<sup>18</sup> As can be seen from Appendix 1, the number of writers actually producing these books – which in some cases were reprinted and republished many times – was relatively small.

<sup>19</sup> It has been suggested to me by Professor Paul Hoftijzer of Leiden University that in fact most Dutch Books were also likely to have been translated from French.

translation of an extremely popular French publication, Davy Brossard's *L'Art & maniere de semer, faire pepiniers des sauvageaux*;<sup>20</sup> in 1594, the anonymous author of *The Orchard, and the Garden* has 'gathered' his information from the Dutch and French and Thomas Hyll states with no apology that 'I have not given thee any labour of mine owne, but rather have collected the sayinges and writings of many auncient authours'.<sup>21</sup> Little is known about Thomas Hyll, but it is apparent that he earned his living as a compiler and translator of books and pamphlets on a wide range of subjects including astronomy, surgery, medicine, arithmetic, physiognomy and philosophy as well as gardening, so the likelihood is that he was no gardener himself, and indeed he never claims to be.<sup>22</sup> The point here is that he bases his authority for what he is writing in the classics and that is authority enough. It is interesting however to note that gardening is included among the subjects that Hyll and his printers clearly viewed as popular publishing for a growing readership.

Other books were simply direct translations. Richard Surflet's *Countrie Farm* (1600) was originally published in French in 1564 by Charles Estienne as *L'agriculture et Maison Rustique*, a very popular work reprinted numerous times between 1564 and 1598: Surflet's was a direct translation into English of the 1598 edition.<sup>23</sup> Even John Evelyn's first foray into horticultural publishing in 1658 was a translation of Nicolas Bonnefons *The French Gardiner*. And as can also be seen from the Appendix, many of these books were reprinted and republished over many years, sometimes under the same author, albeit often after his death or sometimes with a changed name and title. On other occasions, texts were simply

---

<sup>20</sup> Mascall, *The Arte and Maner, howe to plant and graffe*, sig. Aiiiii<sup>v</sup>; Blanche Henrey, *British Botanical and Horticultural Literature before 1800*, 3 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), I, pp. 63-4

<sup>21</sup> Hyll, *The Profitable Art of Gardening* (1579), sig. Aaiii

<sup>22</sup> Thirty-eight titles, including reprints and editions, are listed on the *ESTC* as 'gathered' and 'englished' by Hyll. A short biography of the life of Thomas Hill was published together with a bibliography of his known works in an article by F. R. Johnson, 'Thomas Hill: An Elizabethan Huxley', *HLQ*, 7:4 (1944), 329-351

<sup>23</sup> Copies of these various editions of *Maison Rustique* and *The Countrie Farm* have been compared and contrasted at the British Library.

reprinted under a different author's name. Whatever the other implications, we must note again the obvious popularity of this genre of gardening literature.

However, although the general practice of translating works from Italian and French sources was both acceptable and desirable, it unfortunately leaves us with the difficulty of not really knowing to what extent, if at all, these earliest books reflected actual contemporary practice in England. And in the particular case of gardening literature, the problem is even more pronounced because advice and practices could not simply be transplanted from Mediterranean climates to England – the conditions were different and the directions did not necessarily apply. This is not to say that the advice in these books was never valid, but simply that it has not been 'Englished' – other than translated – in the light of experience.

As we move into the seventeenth century however, there is a marked change in the way gardening writers approach their work, reflecting a growing tendency to question the place of traditional philosophies and eternal truths in the early modern world, and instead to pursue the furtherance of knowledge through practical experiment. This view was first popularised in print by Francis Bacon who disparagingly viewed the current state of natural history, particularly within the Court circles in which he moved, as entertaining but untrustworthy knowledge and he set out to prove that science was a subject that civil society should take seriously. His aim was to elevate the study of natural history, the utility of which was becoming more apparent as Englishmen travelled further and further away from familiar shores, to a publically useful form of science. He challenged traditional views on a number of fronts. In his *Novum Organum* of 1620, he proposed a new

framework for the study of natural history, ‘the foundation of all’, based on empirical knowledge, openly criticising the classical approach of writers such as Aristotle and Pliny.

He wrote for instance of the latter’s *Natural History*, that there is

Nothing duly investigated, nothing verified, nothing counted,  
weighed or measured [...] what in observation is loose and  
vague, is in information deceptive and treacherous.

The problem here was that knowledge was gathered indiscriminately, without any verification on the part of the author, but presented – and accepted – as authoritative. In Bacon’s view however, knowledge was born of experience, not authority.<sup>24</sup> Such ideas, as shall be shown below, were not entirely new, but Francis Bacon was the first person to rationalise and systemise these notions in print and whose work has allowed posterity to credit him with laying the foundations of modern scientific method.<sup>25</sup>

There is however, as indicated, plenty of evidence that such ideas were clearly already in circulation and being practiced by natural scientists, apothecaries, medical practitioners and gardeners throughout the whole of the period of this study, both contemporaneous with Bacon and immediately after his death. Deborah Harkness, for instance, has shown that

---

<sup>24</sup> Paula Findlen, ‘Francis Bacon and the Reform of Natural History in the Seventeenth Century’ in *History and the Disciplines*, ed. by Donald Kelley (Woodbridge: University of Rochester Press, 1997), pp. 239-260. In the same way, Bacon also rejected alchemy, magic and the occult, not because they did not offer any insight into nature – he conceded that they did – but because secrecy was an essential element of their practitioners’ art and this aspect was completely at odds with Bacon’s aim to create and disseminate a public knowledge: Findlen, p. 247

<sup>25</sup> It is also worth remembering that amongst his voluminous writings, in 1625, just a year before his death and after he had been retired from Court life, Francis Bacon wrote what has probably become one of the most enduring and ubiquitously quoted pieces of garden writing from this period, his essay ‘*Of Gardens*’. This was part of a series of 58 essays, covering a huge range of topics and describes, as Bacon puts it, ‘a Princely Garden’. Whether this garden was based on reality or whether it is a vision of an ideal garden is still a moot point. It is a curious mixture of the distinctly old-fashioned (for instance, the medieval mount), fashionable Italianate features such as fountains and forward-thinking ideas such as the ideal of creating a ‘perpetual spring’ with flowers and plants in profusion all year round. It does indicate a degree of horticultural knowledge, particularly about plants and as such I think that this short essay probably tells us more about Bacon’s personal tastes in gardening than it does about the generality of gardening at the time. See John Dixon Hunt and Peter Willis, eds, *The Genius of the Place: the English Landscape Garden 1620-1820* (London: Paul Elek, 1975; repr. London: MIT Press, 1988), pp. 51-56

there was a thriving community of natural scientists living and working in London in the sixteenth century, laying the foundations of a new empirical culture based on scientific experiment. She contrasts the work of Court and university intellectuals such as Bacon, who were still fiercely debating the authority of ancient texts, with these men whose everyday lives were concerned with study of the natural world in an active and practical way, who were, as she says, ‘simply getting on with it’.<sup>26</sup> Whilst Francis Bacon was theorising a new system of knowledge, based on observation and experience, early seventeenth-century gardeners and garden writers were already reflecting this in their practice and in their books. Unlike Thomas Hyll, who ensures that his readers are aware of his authoritative sources and that their work is not diminished by any advice of his own, authors such as Gervase Markham, William Lawson and John Parkinson are at pains to point out that they *are* writing from their own experience and not relying on ancient authorities for their information. Their advice is of a more practical nature and the knowledge they are imparting appertains specifically to the English climate and conditions. In *The English Husbandman*, Gervase Markham states in his Epistle to the reader: ‘I saw one man translate and paraphrase most excellently upon Virgil’s Georgickes, a worke only belonging to the Italian clime’ and he resolves rather to ‘set downe the true manner and nature of our right English Husbandry’, including a chapter on the ‘Art of planting, Grafting and Gardening after our latest and rarest fashion. A worke never before written by any Author.’<sup>27</sup> This book was published in 1613, swiftly followed in 1616 by *The Countrey Farme*, an edited edition of Surfleet’s 1600 translation, but which Markham has ‘Now newly Reviewed, Corrected and Augmented [...] the Husbandrie of France, Italie and

---

<sup>26</sup> Deborah Harkness, *The Jewel House: Elizabethan London and the Scientific Revolution* (London, Yale University Press, 2007), p. 2.

<sup>27</sup> Markham, *English Husbandman* (1613), sig. A; Title page

Spain reconciled and made to agree with ours here in England'.<sup>28</sup> This book also contains a chapter on gardens. Unfortunately however, despite his claims, Markham does not actually change any of the original text, he simply adds to it, with the result that the reader is often faced with contradictory information. Joan Thirsk has argued that, despite his own practical knowledge and his respect for the experience and wisdom of his fellow husbandmen, first and foremost, Markham is still working under the 'powerful influence of the classical message', using conventional genres and traditional models on which to base his notions of advice and experience.<sup>29</sup> This may well be the case, but nevertheless, and whether he was successful or not, Markham's stated aim is to give the reader new and relevant information and his desire to declare that this is what he is doing suggests that this was now a popular course of action. Markham, like Hyll, was a prolific author, publishing books on an astonishing variety of subjects and he too appears to have had a good eye for the market as most of his books proved to be enormously popular, running to many reprints and 'newly revised' editions.<sup>30</sup> Again, it is unlikely that Markham was necessarily an expert in gardening, but the fact that someone so sensitive to the market chose this subject for a practical manual based on English empirical experience suggests a new audience for such publications: one who could both afford and read books, but who were also interested in actually engaging in practical gardening.

Whilst it is possible however to argue that Markham's books were the result of an amalgam of classical and contemporary influences, this was not the case for William

---

<sup>28</sup> Gervase Markham, *Maison Rustique, or the Countrey Farme* (London, 1616), Title page

<sup>29</sup> Thirsk, 'Making a Fresh Start', p. 27

<sup>30</sup> At one point in 1617, there were five different books on horses on the market simultaneously, all by Markham, many of them repeating the same material. This caused enough alarm within the Stationers' Company for them to force Markham to enter into an unprecedented agreement 'never to write any more books or books to be printed of the diseases or Cures of any Cattle, as Horse, Oxe, Cowe, Sheepe, Swine, Goates etc.': Matthew Steggle, *Oxford DNB* [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/18065](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/18065) [accessed 26.10.07]



Lawson's *A New Orchard and Garden*. This book, published in 1618, was devoted entirely to gardening, and was written, as stated by Lawson in his dedication to Sir Henry Belloses,<sup>31</sup> 'by long experience [...] my Northerne Orchard and Country Garden', this long experience being defined on the title page as forty eight years. Although he admires the work of Pliny, Aristotle, Virgil and Cicero, Lawson will leave them to 'their times, manner and several countries', recognising that their advice does not appertain to the English garden. Instead, he has 'of my mere and sole Experience, without respect to any former written Treatise, gathered these Rules and set them down in writing'.<sup>32</sup> The truth of this is borne out in the text, where Lawson makes frequent references to his own particular knowledge of gardening in the north of England.<sup>33</sup> He advises for instance on which fruit trees are 'most common, and meetest for our Northern countries' suggesting the planting of apples, pears, plums and damsons rather than the more tender fruits such as apricots and peaches which 'will not like in our cold parts'.<sup>34</sup> And he not only fails to refer to received wisdom, he also knowingly contradicts it: 'And herein I am of a contray opinion to all them which practice or teach the planting of trees, that ever yet I knew, read or heard of'. He confidently goes on to explain and justify his own thoughts on the correct spacing of trees in an orchard, based on his own observations over nearly fifty years.<sup>35</sup> In this respect

---

<sup>31</sup> Roy Strong identifies this dedicatee as Sir Henry Belasyse of Newburgh Priory in Yorkshire: Strong, *The Artist and the Garden* (London: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 153

<sup>32</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, pp. [31], [29], [33]

<sup>33</sup> John Harvey has identified Lawson as a clergyman living and working in the parish of Ormsby on the banks of the River Tees: Harvey, 'William Lawson and his Garden', *Country Life*, 28 October 1982, 1338-40

<sup>34</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, p. 37

<sup>35</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, p. 56. Four decades later, another fruit-growing clergyman, John Beale of Herefordshire describes Lawson's unorthodox ideas as 'so strange, so contrary [...] so discordant [...] and so incredible, that I could not forbear my smiles'. Despite this, he decided to 'make exact trail with patience' of some of Lawson's ideas, and found, through his own practice and experiment, and much to his surprise, that Lawson's advice was sound. In Lawson's rules he says, 'I find the truth': John Beale, *Herefordshire Orchards: A Pattern for all England* (London, 1657), pp. 13, 19

then *A New Orchard and Garden* does indeed live up to its title, representing a new approach to gardening and to gardening advice.<sup>36</sup>

John Parkinson bases his book equally firmly on his own experience of plants and gardening. He reiterates over and over again in the opening pages that his authority is based purely in his own knowledge gained through experimentation, observation and practice. Unlike Lawson, who simply leaves the work of classical authorities aside, Parkinson, like Bacon, positively rejects them. He is confident in the new scientific method as the key to knowledge:

This I doe affirm upon good knowledge and certaine experience,  
and not as many others doe, tell of wonders of another world,  
which themselves never saw nor ever heard of, except some  
superficiall relation, which they themselves have augmented  
according to their owne fansie and conceit.<sup>37</sup>

Parkinson's comments here are directed both at earlier authors of herbals who were writing about a different place and time when many of the plants now available were unheard of, thereby making their information both out of date and irrelevant to English conditions, as well as towards more recent writers for whom he reserves his more scathing criticism. According to Parkinson, these writers presumed a knowledge of the new plants that began flooding into the capital at the end of the previous century, often as little more than seeds, roots or dead twigs but who cannot possibly have understood or seen for themselves the nature of the plant. As he writes elsewhere 'some of these errors are ancient, and continued by long tradition, and others are of later invention'.<sup>38</sup> It is difficult not to see his specific target here as John Gerard, whose *Herball* of 1597 was by now widely condemned as

---

<sup>36</sup> Perhaps this even represents a better candidate for the 'first' gardening book, being completely original, written by a gardener for gardeners, offering practical advice based on experience.

<sup>37</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 8

<sup>38</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 22

being plagiarised and inaccurate for the very reasons mentioned above.<sup>39</sup> Whilst it seems that Gerard had been prepared to accept whatever he was told about new plants from abroad, John Parkinson actually took the seeds, bulbs and roots arriving off the ships and planted them in his garden to observe how they grew. In 1608, he commissioned Guillaume Boel, a plant hunter, to search out rare plants in Spain on his behalf, Boel coming back with over two hundred different kinds of seeds of which Parkinson writes ‘by sowing them [I] saw the faces of a great many excellent plants’.<sup>40</sup> This is how he built up his extensive knowledge of plants and flowers – by actually growing them in his garden and observing their nature. This was no mere intellectual theorizing, he was actively putting into practice what he preached. He was completely dismissive of what he called ‘idle tales and fancies’ – practices such as adding pike’s blood to a graft in an apple tree to make the fruits red or honey to make them sweet, the kind of advice perpetuated by Hyll, Mascall and Scot, instead challenging the idea that the nature of plants can be altered by the intervention of man and categorically asserting that

There is not any art whereby any flower may be made to grow double,  
that was naturally single, not of any other sent or colour than it first  
had by nature.<sup>41</sup>

His experience has shown him that there is nothing man can do that is not already found in nature: God is the only creator and all that man, or the gardener can do, is to nurture and improve that which is already provided in nature, working in harmony with it in order to bring it to perfection. Therein, for Parkinson, lay the ‘arte of gardening’.

---

<sup>39</sup> Whilst, as has been established, the practice of publishing other people’s work was widely accepted, in the case of the *Herball*, Gerard committed the error of not acknowledging his source and instead passed the work off as his own. For more on the upset and scandal surrounding this publication, see Marcus Woodward, *Gerard’s Herball: the essence thereof distilled* (London: Minerva, 1971), Introduction, pp. xv-xvii. Also Harkness, *The Jewel House*, pp. 15-18

<sup>40</sup> Parkinson, *Theatrum Botanicum*, p. 1108

<sup>41</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 22

However, far from setting a new standard for gardening literature, it is curious to note that the innovations identified in Parkinson's *Paradisi in Sole* did not seem to be taken up by new writers, but were apparently overlooked in the gardening publications of the following thirty years which instead followed much the same format as they had always done, reverting to the earlier derivative models based on herbals and gardening treatises first published in the previous century. Indeed, a closer examination of even these newly published materials, as can be seen from Appendix 1, reveals that almost all of them were in fact either reprints or compilations of earlier publications and were not new at all.<sup>42</sup> In fact, it could be argued that the first major and original work to take up John Parkinson's legacy was John Rae's *Flora: De Florum Cultura*, not published until 1665. Some new publications containing original material did begin to appear towards the end of the period in the form of 'improvement literature', produced, for instance, by members of the Hartlib circle, who were later to become founder members of the Royal Society. As well as Samuel Hartlib himself, this group included Ralph Austen and John Beale, who both produced books on growing apples, Austen's *Treatise of Fruit Trees* and Beale's *Herefordshire Orchards* both being published in the 1650s. However, although these books took up the mantle of writing within the new scientific culture, they were primarily concerned with improvements in husbandry and agriculture for the good of the commonwealth and not particularly with gardening, and as such, like the early books on husbandry, these works fall outside the scope of this thesis.

---

<sup>42</sup> Why this should be is a moot point – perhaps in unsettled times gardeners were not ready to tackle new and radical notions but took refuge instead in the familiar, or perhaps, as noted previously, the cost of this book will have limited its readership and therefore its influence. Lynette Hunter has suggested that this marked gap in the publication of new material, which was not limited to gardening literature but appeared to be a general phenomenon relating to all household books, may be related to issues of ownership of knowledge. For more on this see Hunter 'Books for Daily Life' in *The Cambridge History of the Book*.

The fact is that what were probably the two major works of gardening literature produced during this later period remained unpublished. The first of these was a garden book drafted several times by Sir Thomas Hanmer of Bettisfield to which he never gave a title. One version of his manuscript was discovered and finally published by Ivy Elstob in 1933 as *The Garden Book of Sir Thomas Hanmer*. The second was a monumental work by John Evelyn, his *Elysium Britannicum*, begun in the 1650s but never completed in his lifetime, the unfinished manuscript only being published in the year 2001.<sup>43</sup> However although these works were obviously not, as yet, available in the public domain in the same way as the gardening books discussed so far, Evelyn's work and probably also Hanmer's work were already circulating as manuscripts amongst contemporary gardeners. This was a relatively common practice at the time and still attracted and influenced a significant, if restricted readership.<sup>44</sup> What these works have to tell us about contemporary gardening practice will be dealt with extensively in Chapters 4 and 5 – discussion here will be limited to comparing the way in which these works were written to that which had gone before in order to place them within the trends already identified.

Sir Thomas Hanmer produced at least three manuscript versions of his garden book: the National Library of Wales holds an unbound folio manuscript and a bound quarto manuscript version, neither of which are dated and neither of which appear to be the version used by Ivy Elstob for the eventual publication of the book in 1933, which has apparently now disappeared.<sup>45</sup> Elstob states that her transcription is from a manuscript

---

<sup>43</sup> John Evelyn, *Elysium Britannicum, or the Royal Gardens in Three Books*, ed. by John E Ingram (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, c. 2001)

<sup>44</sup> Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 32

<sup>45</sup> NLW, Bettisfield 1667; 21753B; see Ruth Duthie 'The Planting Plans of some Seventeenth-century Flower Gardens', *GH*, 18:2 (1990), 77-102, (p.101), fn. 8 on the disappearance of this manuscript. My own research would agree with her conclusion.

volume of 1659 and although the manuscript at which she was looking is no longer available to us, there is no reason to assume that this information is not accurate.<sup>46</sup> What is less easy to establish definitively is that Hanmer ever intended to publish this work. The finished manuscripts we have seem reasonably complete and although none are identical, the content is basically the same, giving rise to the possibility at least that Hanmer wrote up these manuscripts for distribution among his friends and fellow gardeners because, as noted above, this was one way of disseminating knowledge among a select network of readers who shared a common enthusiasm.<sup>47</sup> However, an essay on the current state of gardening found among the pages of the unbound manuscript, likely to have been written as a preface, would seem to indicate Hanmer's eventual intention to publish his work, stating as it does that 'this ensuing Catalogue of choice plants is exhibited to the publicke'.<sup>48</sup>

Hanmer was clearly regarded by his contemporaries as an authority on plants and gardening as some knowledge of his work does appear to have disseminated during his lifetime to his peers. John Evelyn sought his advice in planting his garden at Sayes Court as well as inviting Hanmer's contributions to his own work *Elysium Britannicum*.<sup>49</sup> John Rea, a renowned Shropshire nurseryman, dedicated the second edition of his *Flora: De Florum Cultura* (1665) to Hanmer, referring to his superior knowledge: 'I know your Judgement in things of this nature to be Transcendent' he writes in the dedicatory Epistle.

---

<sup>46</sup> *Garden Book*, Front matter

<sup>47</sup> Harold Love, 'Oral and Scribal texts in Early Modern England' in *The Cambridge History of the Book*, ed. by Barnard, pp. 97-121 (p. 106)

<sup>48</sup> NLW, Bettisfield 1667. See Appendix 4 for full transcript of this essay.

<sup>49</sup> Hanmer contributed three full pages on tulips, as well as pages on anemones, irises, ranuncules and daffodils, all of which were simply inserted as they were, in Hanmer's handwriting, into Evelyn's manuscript. Other information on auriculas, gilliflowers and hyacinths was incorporated by Evelyn into his text, either fully or as marginal notes. As noted above (fn. 43), Evelyn's manuscript, with all its additions, alterations, amendments and omissions have now been edited and published by John Ingram.

Hanmer himself writes in a letter to John Evelyn that in Wales ‘many gentlemen [...] have upon my instigation and perception, fallen to plant both flowers and trees and have pretty handsome little grounds’.<sup>50</sup> All this adds weight to the idea that, for the time being at least, Hanmer may have been writing for a small, defined group of fellow garden enthusiasts rather than for a more general readership.

Whatever his intentions however, what we see from these manuscripts is that Sir Thomas was writing an informed book based on his own considerable experience of gardening in North Wales. His manuscript books are compiled from notes made in two small memorandum books over the preceding decade, notes relating to his own experience and observations as well as those collected from gardening contemporaries such as the renowned Parisian nurseryman, Pierre Moryn and John Rose, who was to become gardener to Charles II, to name just two examples. These notebooks will be examined in detail later, but suffice to say here that they clearly formed the basis of knowledge in Hanmer’s book: like Lawson and Parkinson earlier in the century, Hanmer is writing from his own experience. It is intensely practical and personal: he only writes about what he knows and what he is interested in and that is the flower garden and how to grow and nurture the plants that will be cultivated in it. It is interesting that by the time Hanmer is writing in 1659, the importance of the ornamental garden, first brought to the fore in print by John Parkinson, now seems established and accepted.

Finally, we must consider the early work of John Evelyn. As mentioned above, his first published book on gardening was a translation of a French work, *The French Gardiner* of

---

<sup>50</sup> Letter to John Evelyn, 1668, cited in Jenny Robinson ‘New Light on Sir Thomas Hanmer’, *GH*, 16:1 (1988), 1-7 (p. 6)

1658, but his major work during the period under question was his draft of *Elysium Britannicum*. The nature and purpose of this manuscript have been and continue to be the subject of a great deal of debate, but the consensus is that it was first compiled around 1657-9: Evelyn mentions it in his dedication to *The French Gardiner* and his correspondence shows that he was distributing drafts of the text to friends and colleagues in 1660.<sup>51</sup> John Ingram, the editor who finally brought Evelyn's draft into print in 2001, observes that there is no doubt that much of much of the material contained within the *Elysium Britannicum* was compiled from a wide variety of sources, both ancient and modern and included contributions from Evelyn's wide network of colleagues noting that in some cases, pages written in other hands, such as one from Thomas Hanmer on tulips, are simply inserted into the text.<sup>52</sup> The scope of the book was monumental. Beginning with Adam and Eve and the loss of Eden, Evelyn shows how the art of gardening can recreate this paradise. His themes range from the practical, including sections on soil and compost, medicinal plants, decorative flowers, the design of parterres and groves, to the scientific or pseudo-scientific, including the cosmic processes that influence the seasons and the generation and growth of plants, to the philosophical, including enquiry into the perfection of nature and the dignity of the gardening and the gardener. However, in his quest to produce the most up-to-date statement of the gardener's art and science, Evelyn continually altered and annotated the text throughout his life, with the result that he never felt it was complete. Twenty years after the production of the first draft, Evelyn wrote that

---

<sup>51</sup> The most recent and authoritative such debate was the Dumbarton Oaks Colloquium on the History of Landscape Architecture 1993 'John Evelyn's *Elysium Britannicum* and European Gardening', which resulted in the publication of a book of the same title (see fn.52 below), contributed to by a number of eminent historians and garden historians.

<sup>52</sup> John E. Ingram, 'John Evelyn's *Elysium Britannicum*: Provenance, Condition, Transcription' in *John Evelyn's 'Elysium Britannicum' and European Gardening*, ed. by Therese O'Malley and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn (Washington DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library, 1998), pp. 35-55 (p. 36)



‘I am almost out of hope that I shall ever have strength and leasure to bring it to maturity’.<sup>53</sup>

In his preface to *The French Gardiner*, where Evelyn first made public his intention to write *Elysium Britannicum*, he writes ‘I have long since had inclinations, and a design of communicating some other things of this nature from my own experience: and especially concerning the Ornaments of Gardens, etc.’.<sup>54</sup> So like our other gardening authors, Evelyn intended to base his book on experience and, as will be detailed in Chapter 3, we know he was well equipped to do this because by this time he had gained plenty of practical experience in the creation of new gardens both at the Evelyn family seat in Wotton, Surrey and at his own home at Sayes Court in Deptford. However, what was different about Evelyn was his wish to combine the dissemination of practical information with high literary aspirations. So he presents his information, not ‘plainly to playne men’ as Scot did, but embellished with classical allusions and quotes from ancient and more recent authors, demonstrating, in addition to his experience, his wide and learned reading. At the same time too, he appears to have taken on board, perhaps from his association with members of the Hartlib circle, the move (later to be brought to fruition by the Royal Society) towards a more collaborative approach to the gathering and dissemination of information. Despite his

---

<sup>53</sup> Evelyn to John Beale, 11 July 1679, cited in Evelyn, *Elysium Britannicum*, Introduction by John Ingram, p. 5. Evelyn was right of course, as a further twenty years of revision still did not result in a completed manuscript although throughout this time he did publish a string of other horticultural works including *Sylva: or a Discourse of Forest-Trees* (1664), *Kalendarium Hortense; or The Gard’ners Almanac* (1664), *Terra, a short treatise on soil* (1679, published as a new addition to *Sylva*) and *Acetaria: or a Discourse of Sallets* (1699) all of which also appeared, in part at least, in the draft of *Elysium Britannicum*. Despite his own assertion that he would deal with the more refined parts of horticulture and that he had ‘no designe to nauseate the world, with repetitions of those trite and vulgar observations, which hitherto have composed the greater part of bookes extant on this subject’, (Evelyn to Le Franc, 5 Jul 1659, cited in O’Malley & Wolschke-Bulmahn, eds, *John Evelyn’s ‘Elysium Britannicum’ and European Gardening*, p. 103) these books on the practicalities of growing trees, vegetables and salads proved to be extremely popular and were published and republished in a number of editions throughout his lifetime, no doubt contributing to his reputation both then as now as a horticultural expert.

<sup>54</sup> Nicholas Bonnefons, *The French Gardiner* (Translated into English by John Evelyn: London, 1658), sig. A2<sup>v</sup>

own considerable experience, Evelyn invited contributions from and sent out sections of the manuscript for comment and advice to ‘friends, or other worthy persons (conversant in Gardens)’, much of which he attempted to incorporate into his text.<sup>55</sup> Whilst Evelyn continues to reiterate the notion that knowledge must be based on personal experience and observation, he nevertheless also draws heavily on the knowledge of both classical writers and his contemporaries. One effect of Evelyn’s approach is that it brings us back full-circle to the idea, rejected by Parkinson (and Bacon), that classical texts can be a basis for modern scientific knowledge and his frequent use of Latin prose once more necessarily restricts the readership of his book to the educated few.<sup>56</sup>

In conclusion then, the immense popularity of the range of printed gardening manuals produced during the period not only suggests a growing interest in the subject of gardening, but also offers valuable insight into the aspirations of the early modern gardener. Although the derivative nature of much of the material does bring into question how much they actually reflected contemporary practice, it has nevertheless been demonstrated that William Lawson’s *New Orchard and Garden* and John Parkinson’s *Paradisi in Sole*, being original books written by experienced gardeners, stand out in terms of what they can tell us about the realities of early modern gardening.

Nevertheless, despite the limitations of the genre, all these works of gardening literature remain extremely valuable as a guide to the social and cultural concerns of the time and to the intellectual and moral context within which the following chapters are set. It is to this aspect of these books that the focus will now be turned.

---

<sup>55</sup> Michael Hunter, ‘John Evelyn in the 1650s: A Virtuoso in Quest of a Role’ in *John Evelyn’s ‘Elysium Britannicum’ European Gardening*, ed. by O’Malley and Wolschke-Bulmahn, pp. 79-106 (pp.102-4)

<sup>56</sup> These ideas will be examined more fully in Chapter 5.

## 1.2 ‘Profits and Pleasures’ in the early modern garden: the social and cultural context

*Of profits:* Now pause with your selfe, and view the end of all your labours in an Orchard: unspeakable pleasure, and infinite commodity’.<sup>57</sup>

Upon opening any contemporary text on gardening from the early modern period, within a few lines the ideas of profit and pleasure will inevitably appear, usually together, sometimes inextricably entwined and at other times as conflicting notions. Thomas Hyll writes that the gardener will receive ‘two special commodities: The first is profit, which riseth through the increase of hearbes and floures; the other is, pleasure, very delectable through the delight of walkying in the same’, Gervase Markham announces the second part of his book as the ‘Art of Planting, Grafting and Gardening, either for pleasure or profit’, Leonard Mascall declares in his opening doggerel *Unto the Reader* that the ‘The pleasure of this skill is great, The profit is not small’.<sup>58</sup> John Parkinson talks of pleasure and profit and in an ideal world, actually separates the ideas quite literally into two different gardens: the garden of pleasure, full of ‘beautifull flower plants’ and the kitchen garden, consisting of ‘herbes and rootes, fit to be eaten of the rich and poor as nourishment’.<sup>59</sup> However, at the same time, he recognises that not everyone has the luxury of two gardens and so must make one place serve for all uses, ‘making their profit their chieftest pleasure’.<sup>60</sup>

Whilst it is not difficult to establish the ubiquity of the notions of profit and pleasure in garden writing in early modern England, it still needs to be asked why this should be so and to examine more closely what exactly was meant by profit and pleasure. At first sight,

---

<sup>57</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, p. 51[85]

<sup>58</sup> Hyll, *The Profitable Art of Gardening* (1579), sig. Ci; Markham, *English Husbandman* (1613), p. 33; Mascall, *The Arte and maner, howe to plant and graffe*, sig. Ai<sup>v</sup>

<sup>59</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, Epistle to the Reader

<sup>60</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 461

the answers seem as simple as they are obvious. The growing of fruits, vegetables and herbs provides food and medicines for the household and surpluses, whether given away to neighbours or sold at market, bring further benefits to the family and the community. Gardens, whether full of sweet-scented flowers, well-ordered fruit trees or precisely laid out knots, are pleasant places in which to pass the time. And to some of these writers at least the actual activity of gardening was a pleasurable one – as Lawson says ‘there can be no human thing more excellent, either for pleasure or profit’ as the tending of an orchard.<sup>61</sup> However, whilst none of these writers would deny the pleasure of gardens and gardening, they do appear to feel a need to justify the pleasures of gardening by the profits that it inevitably brought. But therein lies the problem, because, as will be shown, in a society essentially based on and governed by Christian and humanist social and intellectual values, the very notions of profit and pleasure were troublesome.<sup>62</sup> Examination of these notions as seen through contemporary garden manuals will reveal how they link to and draw upon cultural and moral preoccupations of the age, as well as showing how these ideas and attitudes changed throughout the period as the social and intellectual context within which they were formed and within which these books were written changed around them.

### **1.2.1 Profit: working for the common good in Elizabethan England**

Tudor society was based on a patriarchal system of hierarchical order, which rested on the family and the household. A commonplace analogy of the time was to view the household as a microcosm of the state, conceived as a miniature commonwealth, where royal and

---

<sup>61</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, p. 1[35]

<sup>62</sup> Margo Todd has identified a distinctive manifestation of humanist ideals that emerged in early modern England as *Christian humanism*. It was aimed at formulating a model for godly behaviour which would apply equally to all men, and the ancient texts which were referred to for instruction included the Bible and the works of the Church fathers, as well as classical writers and moralists: Margo Todd, *Christian Humanism and the Puritan Social Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 22-3

patriarchal authority was seen as a manifestation of a divinely ordered hierarchy. Just as wives, children and servants were subject to the male head of the household (and to their King), so good order in society depended on good order in the household. In his 1577 translation of Heresbach's *Four Bookes of Husbandry*, Barnaby Googe wrote:

Herein were the old husbandes very careful and used always to judge, that where they found the garden out of order, the wyfe of the house (for unto her belonged the charge thereof) was not good huswyfe.<sup>63</sup>

He implicitly links the notion of the well-run patriarchal household with the outward signs of this: the state of the garden was a visible indication of the state of the household and, by inference, the morality of the household members and the authority of the husband within that household. In the same way, the maintenance of stability and good order in society contributed to and reflected the physical and moral well-being of the nation.<sup>64</sup>

The metaphor of the body politic, in which every individual, or part of the body, contributed towards the good of the whole, or the 'common wealth', guided Tudor social and economic thought. In humanist eyes, the whole social order, from noblemen to merchants to husbandmen and artisans were obliged to contribute to the common good, whilst individual or private profit-seeking was viewed with deep suspicion. At all levels, men were subject to the humanist's insistence on productive and profitable occupation, where profit was understood as a recognisable contribution to the health, knowledge, virtue or material well-being of the commonwealth, essential to the maintenance of a stable,

---

<sup>63</sup> Heresbach, *Four Bookes of Husbandry*, p. 48

<sup>64</sup> Susan Amussen, *An Ordered Society: Gender and class in early modern England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988), pp. 1-2; Roberts, 'Gardens of the Gentry', p. 95; Garthine Walker, *Crime, Gender and Social Order in early modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 9-11

ordered and just society. This stability was however threatened if the private interests of the individual should take precedence over the public.<sup>65</sup>

These ideas of course throw up inconsistencies. In the same way that private wealth, and in particular inherited wealth, was a fact of life in early modern society, so too, if hard work and industriousness were to be encouraged (as indeed they were), success would inevitably bring with it a degree of wealth and prosperity. This dichotomy between ‘public’ and ‘private’ interests was a contradiction successfully addressed by the humanist regime of Tudor England: profit was legitimate if it was no detriment to the interests of others, but was viewed as implicitly harmful if retained by the individual rather than invested in the commonwealth. In other words, profit may be condoned if the interests of the commonwealth are put before the interests of the individual, the public before the private.

We should not be surprised then to find the writers of early garden manuals wrestling with these same ideas. Leonard Mascall, for instance, introduces his book with an exhortation

*Unto the Reader:*

The common weale cannot but winne,  
Where eche man dothe entende:  
By skill to make the food fruites mo[re]  
And yll fruites to amende.<sup>66</sup>

Planting and grafting is seen as an occupation that can benefit all mankind because everyone is working to the same end – to bear fruit, or profit. This conflation of ideas successfully blurs the boundaries between the literal and the metaphorical resulting in an ambiguity to be interpreted by the reader. He goes on to say that his advice is ‘not an

---

<sup>65</sup> Quentin Skinner, *Visions of Politics*, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), II, pp. 224-244; Todd, *Christian Humanism*, pp. 124-30

<sup>66</sup> Mascall, *The Arte and Maner, howe to plant and graffe*, sig. Ai<sup>v</sup>

exercise only to the minde, but likewise a great profit manyways, with maintenaunce of health unto the bodie'.<sup>67</sup> Again, this can be interpreted literally – relating to the individual, or at a wider level, incorporating the whole of society, or the body politic. Mascall goes on to write specifically about his own views on the state of the nation. He criticizes 'the base and abject sort of the commonwealth' who are contemptuous of 'labouring of the earth': it comes as somewhat of a surprise to find that he is talking of 'faire personages', who clearly think they do not need to dirty their hands with manual labour. Mascall appears to be reflecting the general unease directed toward those social aspirants who were blurring the boundaries of the traditional social order by seeking to improve their place within it and become gentlemen. He urges his reader to 'leave al wanton games and idle pastimes [...] and be no more as children whiche seeke but their owne gaine and pleasure and seeke one of us for another in all good workes for the commonwealth'.<sup>68</sup> He is not saying that there is necessarily anything wrong with gain, or indeed pleasure, but it must be done for the right reasons and that is the furtherance of the common wealth. The activity of gardening, according to Mascall, is a practical way in which the individual could play his part for the benefit of the whole society.

Gervase Markham, writing at the beginning of the next century, also sees his work as 'most acceptable to men, and most profitable to the kingdome'.<sup>69</sup> He talks in very specific terms of the 'utility and necessitie' of the husbandman, for the 'filling and emptying of his barnes is the increase and prosperity of all his labours'.<sup>70</sup> Note that the emptying of the

---

<sup>67</sup> Mascall, *The Arte and Maner, howe to plant and graffe*, sig. Aiiii<sup>v</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Mascall, *The Arte and Maner, howe to plant and graffe*, sig. Bi

<sup>69</sup> Markham, *English Husbandman* (1613), Epistle to the Reader

<sup>70</sup> Markham, *English Husbandman* (1613), sigs. A2, A3. Although husbandry clearly covers a much wider range of activity than gardening, Markham includes the work of the gardener within the role of the husbandman.

barns, the distribution of the profits, is as important as the filling of them in the first place. This echoes very specifically the idea that the accumulation of wealth is acceptable as long as the ends are a contribution to the good of the community. Like Heresbach, he clearly links the work of the husbandman and the resulting profit with stability and social order:

‘it is most necessary for keeping the earth in order, which else would grow wilde ... and nothing remayning but a Chaos of confusednesse’.<sup>71</sup>

### **1.2.2 Pleasure: ‘honest delight’ in the Jacobean garden**

If profit was a troublesome concept, then the idea of personal pleasure was even more so. In a world where to be a good citizen was characterised by service to the public good, there seemed little place for the garden of pleasure. Seen in Christian humanist terms as ‘private’ and selfish, the pursuit of personal pleasure was antithetical to the common weal: it was associated with recreation and idleness, traits strongly frowned upon because they were non-productive and contributed nothing to the benefit of society as a whole. As we have seen, for any activity not to be seen as self-indulgent, it had to be profitable, and not just profitable, but profitable to the common good. However, by the early seventeenth century these ideas were changing. David Pennington in his article on the moral economy of the Jacobean period argues that by the 1620s, in response to changing economic conditions within the country and abroad, rather than imposing tight controls over economic expansion, policies were being designed to encourage individual profit, as the resulting prosperity was now being recognised as a factor in maintaining social stability and the pursuit of self-interest began to be accepted as of benefit to the whole.<sup>72</sup> Keith Thomas offers a more pragmatic explanation, suggesting that contemporary social prescription was

---

<sup>71</sup> Markham, *English Husbandman* (1613), sig. A3<sup>v</sup>

<sup>72</sup> David Pennington, ‘Beyond the Moral Economy: Economic Change, Ideology and the 1621 House of Commons’, *Parliamentary History*, 25:2 (2006), 214-231



‘wildly out of line with reality’ as new sources of wealth created new aspirations which played havoc with traditional notions of a static social order as men sought to ‘get on in life’.<sup>73</sup> As a contemporary observed, ‘the sons [...] not contented with their states of their fathers to be counted yeomen [...] must skip into his velvet breeches and silken doublet and [...] must ever after think scorn to be called any other than gentlemen’.<sup>74</sup> The point is that traditional notions towards the pursuance of profit and pleasure were being challenged on all fronts. And, to return to our gardeners, although often still linking them to the profits to be had, none deny the pleasures of gardening. For some the pleasure was in the pleasant and ordered result:

What joy and fruit commeth of trees: ... when the trees bee planted  
And set orderly and pleasantly, they give no small pleasure to man.<sup>75</sup>

For others it was in the labour and skill (which of course solved the idleness problem!). William Lawson declares that ‘there can be no human thing more excellent, either for pleasure or profit’ than the skill of looking after the orchard and, at the end of his book, once his orchard and garden are established, he could stand back and take ‘honest delight’ in the fruits of his labours:

But as God hath given man things profitable, so hath he allowed him honest comfort, delight and recreation in all the works of his hands [...] For what is greedy gaine, without delight, but moyling, and turmoiling in slavery? But comfortable delight, with content, is the good of everything, and the pattern of heaven.<sup>76</sup>

Lawson, who we remember was a clergyman, then goes on to make the obvious, and convenient, comparison with Paradise:

---

<sup>73</sup> Keith Thomas, *The Ends of Life: Roads to Fulfilment in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 29

<sup>74</sup> Sir Thomas Wilson, *The State of England* (1600), in *The Camden Society*, Third series, 52, Miscellany volume 16, ed. by F. J. Fisher (London, 1936), p. 18

<sup>75</sup> Anon, *The Orchard, and the Garden* (London, 1597), pp. 20-1

<sup>76</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, pp. 1[35], 52[86]

What was Paradise? but a Garden and Orchard, full of trees and hearbs, full of pleasure? and nothing there but delights.<sup>77</sup>

It is an inescapable fact that in Christian belief, when God chose the perfect situation for Man before the fall, he placed him in a garden. The punishment for his sin was to be cast out. It is therefore not too difficult a step to justify the pleasures of a garden as ordained by God, at the same time remembering of course that Adam was not idle in his garden, but was charged to tend and work in it. It is this pleasure that Lawson feels he can legitimately take in his garden.

The expression of notions such as these also draw our attention to the idea of a garden as a place of spiritual and physical refreshment. Lawson writes of those who are ‘tyred with the hearing and judging of litigious controversies, choaken with the close ayre of their sumptuous buildings [...] overburthened with tedious discourings’, but who can retire to their gardens and orchards in order to renew and refresh their ‘over-wearied spirits’.<sup>78</sup> In setting up this direct contrast between the ‘sweet and pleasant aire’ of the garden and the ‘close ayre’ of the city, Lawson is reflecting very closely a prevalent popular notion contrasting the ‘court’ and the ‘country’. Although there was nothing particularly new about this idea,<sup>79</sup> during the early years of the seventeenth century in the lead up to the Civil wars, this ideology was becoming specific and polarised, increasingly contrasting the positive image of the morally upright ‘country’ with a negative image of the corrupt and dishonest ‘court’ and drawing on very real concerns of the population over extravagance,

---

<sup>77</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, p. 53[87]

<sup>78</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, p. 53[87]

<sup>79</sup> Columella, the Roman agricultural writer was, for instance, most eloquent in his praise of the country life, setting it in stark contrast to what he considered to be a contemptible life spent seeking preferment at court: Thirsk, ‘Making a Fresh Start’, p. 21. Even today, the wholesome country life is set in favourable contrast to the materialism of the city.

depravity and popery manifested by the rulers of the land.<sup>80</sup> The very words court and country became synonymous with corruption on the one hand and honesty on the other. However, William Lawson stops short of outright condemnation of court or city life, but rather he recognises the burdens of such a life, offering his ‘delicate Garden and Orchard’ as ‘the remedie’.<sup>81</sup>

So for these garden writers of the early seventeenth century then, the pleasures and the profits are still intricately linked: pleasure in the garden is seen in terms of the profits gained, whether through the satisfaction gained from the hard work, the actual foodstuffs produced for the household and beyond, the benefits of spiritual and physical refreshment or simply the pleasure of seeing an ordered and comely space adorned with flowers, blossom and fruit.

Many of these arguments are reiterated by John Parkinson in the opening pages of *Paradisus in Sole*. In his Epistle to the Reader, he introduces the framework within which the rest of his book will be set. First and foremost he, like Lawson, places his work in a specifically Christian context, most obviously by referring to paradise not once, but twice in the title of his book. His opening lines describe ‘God, the creator of Heaven and Earth’ who ‘planted a garden for him [Adam] to live in, which he stored with the best and choyssest Herbes and Fruits the earth could produce’. It is difficult not to miss the direct comparison with the earthly paradise which Parkinson intends to create in this book. He notes, again as Lawson did, that in this garden and ‘even his innocency’, Adam ‘was to labour and spend his time’.

---

<sup>80</sup> Richard Cust and Ann Hughes, eds, *Conflict in early Stuart England: studies in religion and politics, 1603-1642* (London: Longman, 1989), p. 20

<sup>81</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, p. 53[87]

Parkinson talks too of the garden as place of spritual refreshment ‘by comforting the mind, spirit and senses with an harmless delight’ and echoing the views of Bacon, he deems it ‘a thing unfit to conceal or bury knowledge God hath given and not impart it’: he believes knowledge should be shared, not held as ‘secrets’, and this is one of the reasons that he is writing this book, in order to ‘further inform the reader’.<sup>82</sup> These themes are all well rehearsed by his contemporaries. However, where John Parkinson stands out amongst the authors discussed is in his attitude to the profits and pleasures of gardening. Like his contemporaries, he discusses them both, but unlike them he places a different emphasis on pleasure. Within the framework of conventional Christian rhetoric, he reiterates the pleasures of gardening over and again: ‘God planted a Garden [...] that he [Adam] might have not onely for necessitie whereon to feede, but for pleasure also’, ‘God made to grow everie tree pleasant to the sight and good for meate’ and so on. Even after he had ‘lost the place for his transgression’, Adam did not lose the knowledge that God had given him and was able to continue to ‘use all things as well of pleasure as of necessitie’.<sup>83</sup> According to Parkinson, delight and pleasure in gardens has been there since the beginning. It was given by God and does not therefore have to be justified in the way that his predecessors felt it necessary to do. As we shall see, for Parkinson, gardens, plants and flowers are to be recommended for *no other reason* than that they are delightful and pleasurable.

---

<sup>82</sup> See fn. 24 above

<sup>83</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, Epistle to the Reader

### 1.2.3 The demoralisation of pleasure:<sup>84</sup> John Parkinson's 'Garden of Pleasant Flowers'

As has already been discussed, the idea that the pursuit of self-interest, for profit or pleasure, was becoming more acceptable in early modern England. However, alongside this should be considered the related and contemporaneous rise in conspicuous consumption.<sup>85</sup> Contrasting vividly with traditional classical, humanist and biblical discourses that differentiated between needs and wants, privileging the first and condemning the second, the idea of luxury and acquisition of luxury goods was, by the early seventeenth century, also beginning to lose its overtones of moral disapproval. New aspirations, fuelled by the ever-increasing number of rare and exotic goods arriving in the ports of London, increased opportunities for travel, increased awareness of new possibilities arising from the continued spread and accessibility of books and print, even royal encouragement of luxury trades such as James I's enthusiastic endorsement of a domestic silk industry: all these were making available and creating a demand for exotic and luxury goods which in turn engendered a growing culture of conspicuous consumption which by now was becoming both acceptable and desirable.<sup>86</sup> Whilst wealth had always been recognised as a necessity required to meet the obligations of living in a style appropriate to an elevated position in society, it seemed that now the display of luxury and the acquisition of goods not only indicated status, but could also *confer* status on their owners.<sup>87</sup> This again posed a challenge to traditional notions of hierarchy, as alongside the

---

<sup>84</sup> This phrase is adapted from Linda Peck, *Consuming Splendor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 8 where she uses the word to describe the process by which luxury began to lose its moral overtones during the Jacobean period.

<sup>85</sup> See Peck, *Consuming Splendor* ; Thomas, *The Ends of Life*, esp. Chapter 4 ; Keith Wrightson, *Earthly Necessities: Economic Lives in Early Modern Britain* (London: Yale University Press, 2000)

<sup>86</sup> Peck, *Consuming Splendor*, p. 2

<sup>87</sup> Thomas, *The Ends of Life*, p. 113; Alice T. Freidman 'Inside/Out: Women, Domesticity, and the Pleasures of the City' in *Material London, c. 1600*, ed. by Lena Cowen Orlin (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), p. 232

expanding range of luxury goods available was an expanding section of the population who felt both entitled to use them and who were prosperous enough to acquire them.

As new wants were engendered and satisfied, the old distinctions between needs and wants were eroded, until, as Keith Thomas has observed, luxuries gradually became relabelled as necessities. Whilst early in the seventeenth century Thomas Mun was to condemn 'silks, sugars and spices' as 'unnecessary wants' leading to 'idleness and pleasure contrary to the law of God', by 1667 Bishop Thomas Sprat could write that goods were to be welcomed because they brought 'felicity', 'pleasure' and 'greater delight'. The quest for wealth and possessions was becoming an acceptable goal for human endeavour.<sup>88</sup> The pursuit of self-interest, profit or pleasure was no longer to be condemned.

It is within this environment and as a response to the changing times that John Parkinson produced his outstanding book on gardening *Paradisi in Sole, Paradisus Terrestris* in which he unequivocally extols the virtues of the ornamental pleasure garden for its own sake. Under cover of an apparently conventional veneer, the publication of this book in fact represented a revolution in horticultural writing. This is a bold statement to make, but closer study of the text reveals a radical new approach by the author to his subject: '*A Garden of all sorts of Pleasant Flowers*'. This supplementary English title given to *Paradisi in Sole* is both remarkable and revealing: not only is this the first book to take the beauty of plants and flowers as its principal subject, it also describes for the first time the creation of a garden in which the beauty of the plants and flowers are to be its primary purpose. Parkinson himself declares that this is a new kind of book: 'having perused many herbals ... none of them have particularly severed those that are beautifull flower plants, fit

---

<sup>88</sup> Thomas, *The Ends of Life*, pp. 139-40; Peck, *Consuming Splendor*, p. 7

to store the garden of delight and pleasure, from the wilde and unfit' and this is what he sets out to remedy: 'I [...] have here selected and set forth a Garden of all the chiefest for choyce and fairest for show.'<sup>89</sup> In contrast to the gardening books that preceded it, this book devotes the first and by far the longest chapter to the 'Ordering of the Garden of Pleasure' in which Parkinson advocates gardens, plants and gardening for no other reason than that they are pleasurable. He recommends plants and flowers as ornaments, delights, objects of beauty or curiosity. He feels no obligation, as for instance John Gerard had done, to attribute plants with 'uses' and vertues', any more than he feels the necessity to regard the pleasure as some kind of 'reward' for hard work, as would appear to be the case with William Lawson. Whilst acknowledging that the 'the delight is great', Gerard insists of plants that 'the use is greater, and joyned often with necessitie'.<sup>90</sup> Parkinson on the other hand, relegates the description of uses and virtues of plants to the bottom of his list of reasons for writing his book: 'Fourthly [and lastly], I have also set down the Vertues and Properties of them in a briefe manner'.<sup>91</sup> The first plant he describes in his book is the Crown Imperiall 'for his stately beautifullness deserveth the first place in this our Garden of delight'. He devotes a full folio page to how it looks, as well as a fabulous woodcut drawing of the flower, but dismisses the virtues with 'I know of none'.<sup>92</sup>

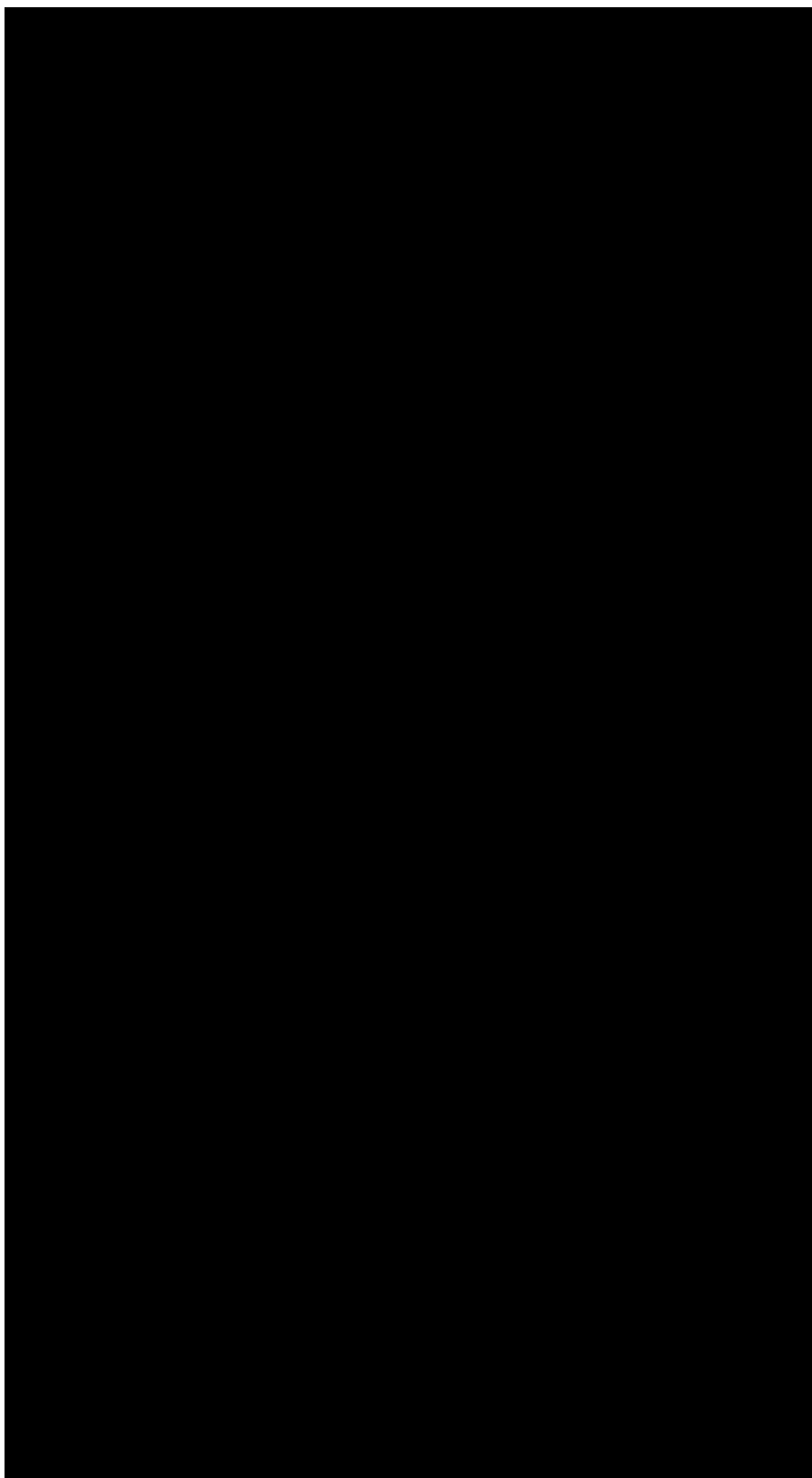
---

<sup>89</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, Epistle to the Reader

<sup>90</sup> John Gerard, *The Herball, or the Generall Historie of Plantes*, (London, 1597), The Epistle Dedicatorie [p.1]

<sup>91</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, Epistle to the Reader

<sup>92</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, pp. 27-9



**Figure 7** Crown Imperial from Parkinson's *Paradisi in Sole*



Roy Strong has observed that the flower garden evolved as a consequence of the increased interest in new and rare plants from abroad being imported into the country in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.<sup>93</sup> Plant collectors travelled abroad to search out exotic plants to stock the gardens of the nobility, gardens that were, in themselves, showpieces of wealth, status and fashion. Books such as Parkinson's *Paradisi in Sole* were also luxury items and the popularity of such works brought the rare and exotic to the attention of a wider public. In the same way that the consumption of luxury goods was becoming accepted, so too was the display of rare and costly plants in the garden, so we should perhaps not be surprised at Parkinson's timely advice on how to plant them and show them off to their best advantage. In addition, he hopes to guide his readers in what plants to choose, 'what to desire', and presumably he feels that he is satisfying those desires.<sup>94</sup> Unlike Mascall, Parkinson has no problem with those who seek their own pleasure and indeed is actively encouraging them to do just that. It would appear that no longer does the pursuit of pleasure have to be justified by 'profits', but it can be actively sought in its own right.<sup>95</sup> Profits he leaves to the Kitchen Garden and the Orchard.

It has been demonstrated then that over the period of this study, there were fundamental shifts in the way people viewed their world: an acceptance of the emerging concept of science slowly displaced both the unchallenged wisdom of the ancients; the dichotomy between concepts of public good and private prosperity gradually veered in favour of the individual; attitudes towards previously frowned upon notions such as consumption, luxury

---

<sup>93</sup> Strong, *The Artist and the Garden*, p. 145

<sup>94</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, Epistle to the Reader

<sup>95</sup> Just a few years earlier in 1625, Francis Bacon in his essay '*Of Gardens*' expressed much the same view: 'Indeed, it is the Purest of Humane Pleasures' he wrote, before going on to describe a 'princely' garden, laid out with an abundance of fruit trees and ornamental flowers. He makes absolutely no mention of profits or labour.

and pleasure lost their moral overtones. All these contributed to creating a new social context in which wealth and status could be displayed, and of course, it could be displayed in gardens as well as anywhere else. It has also been shown that these changes can be traced through the gardening literature of the period, with writers as concerned to contribute to contemporary social and moral debate as they were to offer gardening advice. Now this context has been set, it remains to examine how the theory presented in the manuals relates to actual practice in the gardens of early modern England.



## CHAPTER 2

### THE ELIZABETHAN GARDEN: CHANGING PRIORITIES AND PRACTICES

After you have chosen out and fenced your garden-plot ... you shall then beginne to fashion and proportion out the same, sith the conveyance remaineth a great part of the gardiners art<sup>1</sup>

So advises Gervase Markham to the English husbandman on the creation of his garden.

Markham then goes on to describe in detail how to lay out alleys and quarters and suggests ways of ornamenting them that will ‘breed infinite delight to the beholders’. However, he also concedes that from the model he offers that ‘any industrious braine may with little difficulty derive and fashion to himself divers other shapes and proportions, according to the nature and site of the earth’.<sup>2</sup>

John Parkinson realises too that ‘To prescribe one forme for every man to follow, were too great presumption and folly: for every man will please his owne fancie’. Nevertheless, like Markham, he goes on to set out the basic ground rules for the layout of a garden, describing alleys, squares (another word for quarters) and a variety of ways of ornamenting them. Then ‘let every man chuse which him liketh best, or may most fitly agree to that proportion of ground hee hath set out for that purpose’.<sup>3</sup>

Francis Bacon in his eloquent and lyrical description of a ‘Prince-like’ garden also agrees that the garden ‘is best to be square’, divided and edged with alleys and enclosed with a ‘stately hedge’, but again, ‘For the Ordering of the Ground, within the Great Hedge, I leave

---

<sup>1</sup> Markham, *English Husbandman*, p. 112

<sup>2</sup> Markham, *English Husbandman*, pp. 112-116

<sup>3</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 3

it to Variety of Device'. Nevertheless, he cannot resist offering advice based on his personal preferences: 'first it be not too Busie, or full of Worke ... I do not like Images Cut out in Juniper', but 'Little low Hedges ... with some Pretty Pyramides, I like well'. We learn as much about contemporary garden practices from what Bacon rejects as we do from that which he advocates!<sup>4</sup>

These examples illustrate a number of points relevant to the subject of this chapter.

Although they are from early seventeenth-century published garden literature, all the authors were living and working in the previous century and their views are therefore likely to represent those prevalent in late Elizabethan times. Firstly, there is clearly a basic, accepted framework of how a garden should be laid out, which could be summed up as a 'four square forme',<sup>5</sup> divided by alleys or walks and enclosed with walls, fences, hedges or ditches. William Lawson, who had been gardening for forty-eight years by the time he published his book, went so far as to provide a simple illustration of the 'generall' form of a garden which shows all these basic features (see **Figure 8** over). Secondly, the design chosen for the garden would inevitably be dictated by the limitations or otherwise of the site: as Parkinson puts it 'all men doe well know, that some situations are more excellent then others'.<sup>6</sup> Thirdly, the detail of the design appeared to be left to the gardener's own devices.<sup>7</sup>

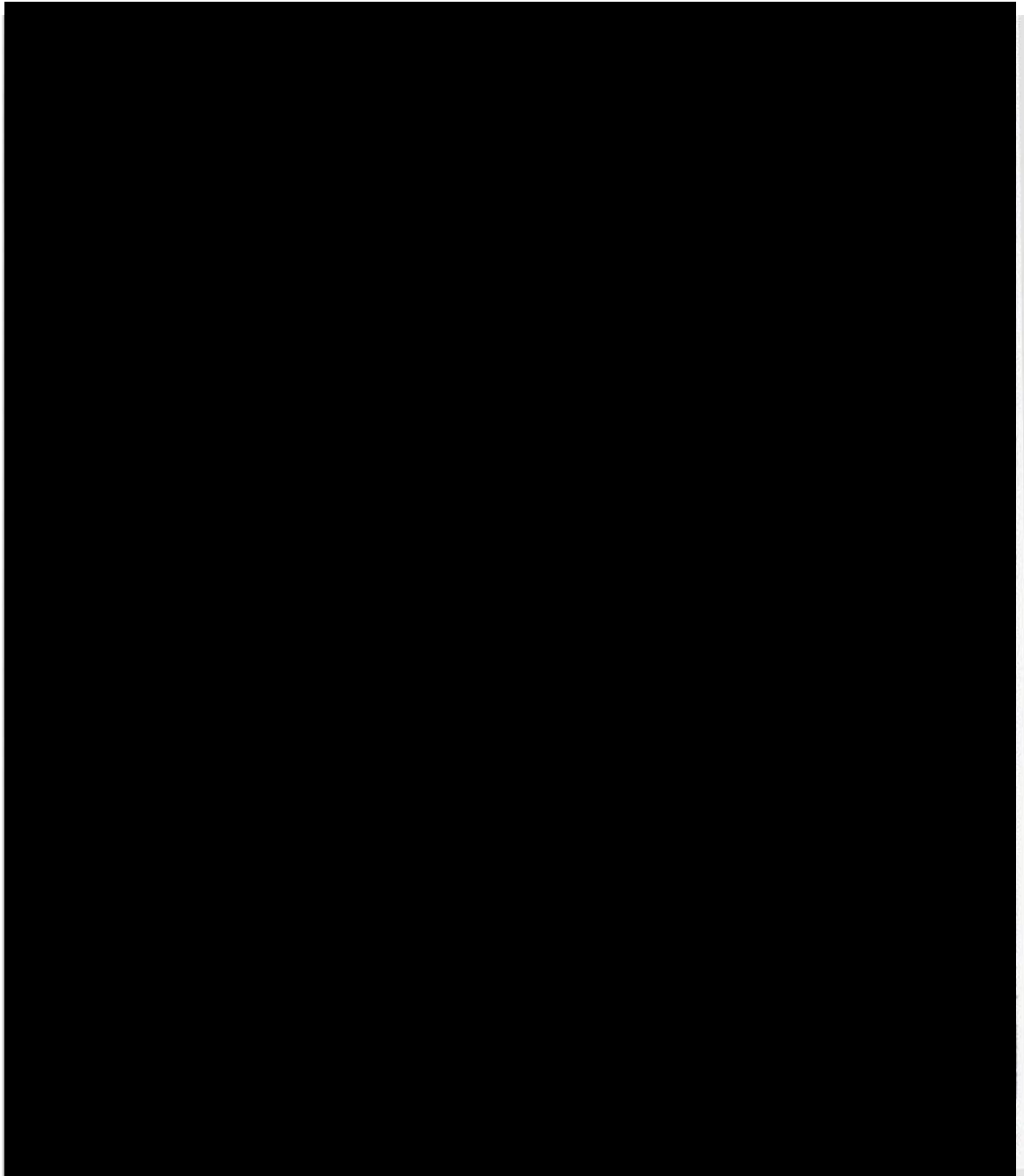
---

<sup>4</sup> *Of Gardens*, pp. 51-56

<sup>5</sup> See for instance Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 3

<sup>6</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 1

<sup>7</sup> This last point is reinforced by Timothy Mowl's observation that of the very few descriptions we have of Elizabethan gardens, they are, as previously discussed, not only very grand and probably untypical, but they bear little resemblance to each other: Timothy Mowl, *Elizabethan and Jacobean Style* (London: Phaidon, 1993), p. 177. This may simply be due to the inevitable variations in reporting by contemporary observers, but nevertheless it does support the idea that within the basic framework, the detailed design of the garden was not prescribed, but left to the individual. Mowl does note however that one common feature of all these gardens is the square or rectangular layout.



**Figure 8 William Lawson's Form of a Garden** <sup>8</sup>  
from *A New Orchard and Garden*, p.10

---

<sup>8</sup> Paula Henderson suggests that this plan is a simplified version of what was being done in the most fashionable gardens, made accessible to Lawson's audience of prosperous country folk and gentry: Henderson, *Tudor House and Garden*, p. 109

So what were the origins of this basic garden layout and how was it developed by the gardeners of early modern England? From where did they get their inspiration, what outside influences affected their choices and how did they put these ideas into practice? Was there a discernible 'style' of gardening and did this change over the period in question? What, in fact, did the late sixteenth century garden look like?

An attempt will be made to answer these questions by examining both prescriptive designs and actual garden practice throughout the period to trace how the various new influences gradually being introduced were being adopted and adapted, if at all, by English gardeners and how they were incorporated into English gardens. Although it is not the place of this thesis to examine medieval gardens in detail, this is where we must start if we are to begin to understand the inherited legacy upon which early modern gardeners were building.<sup>9</sup> It should then be possible to see how future generations of gardeners took up new ideas, rejected others and continued to create and develop gardens that not only reflected the society in which they lived and their place within that society, but also their individual tastes and preferences.

As already seen, ideas and influences for the great gardens of royalty and the aristocracy may well have come from Renaissance Italy, either by first hand or via classical literature, but taking a wider view that encompasses all gardens, it would seem that many features of early modern gardens simply evolved from medieval and monastic traditions and that at a practical level most gardeners, rather than creating something from scratch, were starting with an existing plot which would already have some kind of form and structure. It is

---

<sup>9</sup> For authoritative work on medieval gardens see John Harvey, *Mediaeval Gardens* (London, 1981); Sylvia Landsberg, *The Medieval Garden* (London: British Museum Press, 1995)

generally agreed amongst garden historians that during the reign of Elizabeth, many familiar features of medieval gardens remained much in evidence. Paula Henderson notes that by the end of the reign, gardens were still divided into compartments, enclosed by walls or hedges, and that they contained ‘arbours and bowers, mounts, ponds and fountains’.<sup>10</sup> Strong lists features inherited from the Medieval garden including ‘walks, mounts, roses, fountains, grassy banks and arbours’ all ‘destined to linger on, relabelled or transmuted, as part of the Renaissance garden’.<sup>11</sup> C. Paul Christianson remarks from the viewpoint of the early 1500s that ‘what continued as a constant garden feature throughout the sixteenth century was the notion of formal bed layout, with right-angled corners and arrow-straight outer boundaries’.<sup>12</sup>

Sylvia Landsberg has identified three types of medieval pleasure garden which she relates to different levels, albeit the higher orders, of the social hierarchy: the herber garden, the orchard garden and the pleasure park. Gardens belonging to larger properties would have included a regularly laid out orchard as well as the enclosed herber garden and those belonging to royalty and the nobility extended their boundaries even further to include a park, again probably enclosed, populated with trees and ‘wild’ animals and birds. These parks were for pleasure and refreshment and were smaller and more ordered than the large recreational hunting parks which would also lie adjacent to the gardens of the aristocracy. Owners of more modest means would, she suggests, probably restrict their garden layout to simply the herber garden.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> Henderson, *Tudor House and Garden*, p. 94; ‘Clinging to the past: medievalism in the English ‘Renaissance’ garden’, *Renaissance Studies*, 25:1 (2011), 42-69

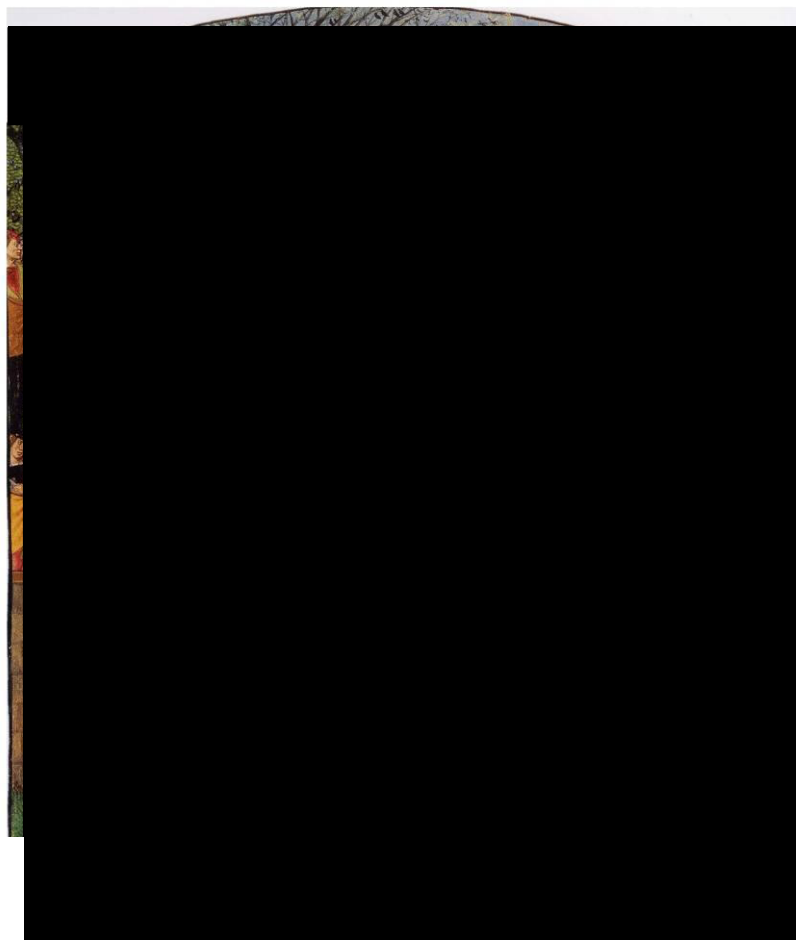
<sup>11</sup> Strong, *The Renaissance Garden in England*, pp. 10, 14

<sup>12</sup> Christianson, *The Riverside Gardens of Thomas More’s London*, p. 164

<sup>13</sup> Landsberg, *Medieval Garden*, p. 13



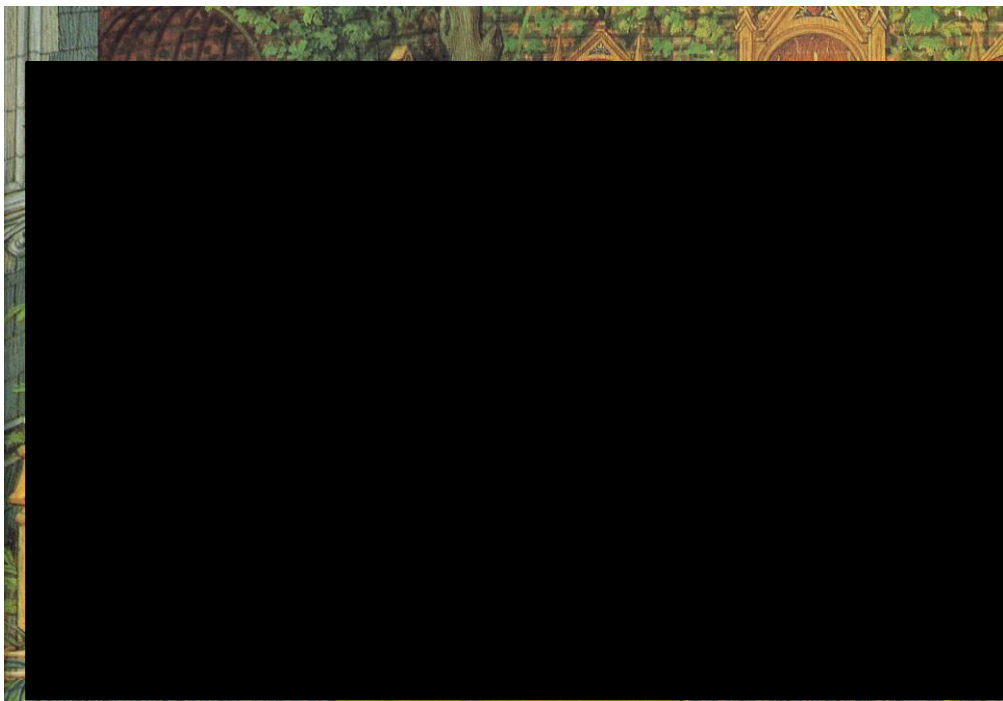
These herbers were small ornamental gardens, generally characterised by a turfed area or lawn with herbaceous borders and square beds, enclosed within walls, trellis or hedges. In the thirteenth century, a well-travelled German Dominican churchman, Albertus Magnus, wrote that such a garden would contain ‘a great diversity of medicinal and scented herbs’ and it would be square. It may also contain fruit trees for their ‘perfumed flowers and agreeable shade’.<sup>14</sup> His detailed description of the pleasure garden is recognisable in contemporary paintings from around Europe spanning the next three hundred years, paintings which have probably done more than anything else to inform our view of what a medieval



---

■ [Redacted footnote text]

They show enclosed, grassy areas with flowers and fruit trees set out in an orderly geometric fashion, often with a central fountain. These gardens as depicted in paintings are peopled by gentlewomen sewing or reading, reclining lovers and musicians – clearly these are areas for contemplation, leisure and pleasure and by being enclosed are, literally and metaphorically, cut off from the ‘real’ world outside the gates and walls. It is also clear that these gardens were only for members of the higher social orders – noblemen or women – or the ■ were monastic gardens, provided for another estate that was ‘set apart’.



**Figure 10 A Herber (French, c. 1465)**  
from Landsberg, *The Medieval Garden*, front cover

However, what these paintings do not show is what was probably the most important part of the garden, that is the productive, utilitarian, vegetable garden which will have supplied a significant proportion of the dietary needs of the household, whatever its size, and must surely, in fact, be the type of garden to which the majority of folk were limited. In his study of medieval food production, Chris Dyer has observed that a peasant holding

generally comprised a cottage and a plot of land in which to grow garden produce, estimating that there were approximately a million such households and therefore gardens in England in 1300.<sup>15</sup> Unfortunately, visual images for these types of garden are almost non-existent. The best we can do is study maps and surveys, some of which contain sufficient detail to indicate at least the basic geometric layout of a garden which was to remain the basis of garden designs throughout the period of this study.

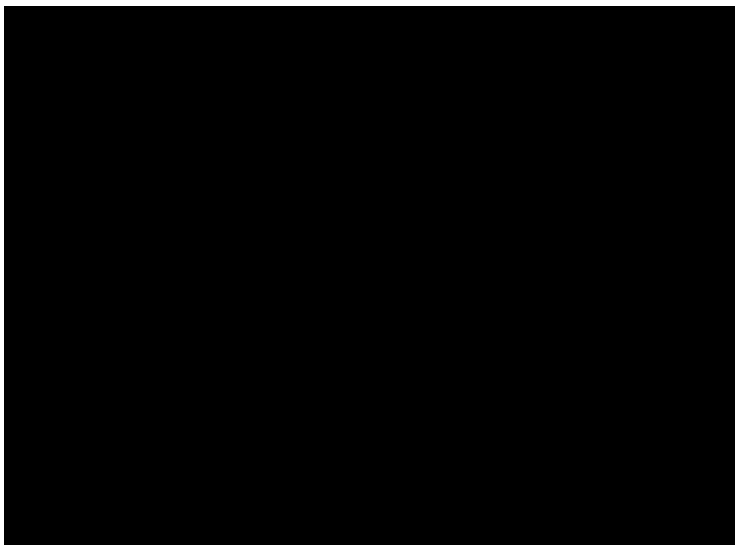


**Figure 11 Wilton, Wiltshire, c. 1565**  
from Landsberg, *The Medieval Garden*, p.47

---

<sup>15</sup> Chris Dyer, 'Gardens and Garden Produce in the Later Middle Ages' in C. M. Woolgar, D. Sergeantson and T. Waldron, eds, *Food in Medieval England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 28-40 (p. 29)

It is worth noting too that these garden features, whether the layout or the typical structures therein, formed part of a common European tradition which can be traced throughout the medieval period. An extant ninth-century plan from the St Gall Monastery in Switzerland shows a regular layout of a garden that does not look remarkably different from the artisan's gardens depicted in the map detail of sixteenth-century Wilton in Wiltshire and David Jacques has noted that an examination of the various components of early Tudor gardens confirms their place within a European tradition.<sup>16</sup> However, at the same time, changes were afoot in the gardens of Renaissance Europe which had yet to reach England. In Italy in particular, the design of the garden was becoming the domain of the architect and it was planned as part of an overall design that was seen as an extension of the house, reflecting the Renaissance ideals of harmony and proportion expressed practically in geometrical terms: straight alleys, walks, arbours, hedges and walls dividing the garden into regular sections and ornamented, for instance, by the symmetrical planting of trees, placing of pots or positioning of painted stanchions. An example of this layout is clear in an engraving made in 1573 of the gardens of the Villa d'Este at Tivoli:



**Figure 12 *Palazzo etardini di Tivoli* (Stefano Dupérac, 1573)**  
from Alberto Lombardo, *Views of Villa D'Este in the XVII century* (Rome, 2005), p.17

<sup>16</sup> Lansberg, *Medieval Garden*, p. 38; David Jacques 'The *Compartment System* in Tudor England', *GH*, 27:1 (Summer, 1999), 32-53, p. 38

However, whilst this idea of architectural harmony is an extremely important concept to be taken into consideration, it is nevertheless of limited use in explaining the form of most gardens, as it necessarily implies a whole new house and garden being designed and built from scratch, which was very much the exception rather than the rule.<sup>17</sup> It has already been noted that this regular layout was in fact a feature of much older gardens, so, apart from the concept of architect as garden designer, what else was new about European Renaissance design that could be more readily emulated?

Strong asserts that ‘in concrete terms, the result [...] might be said to be a multiplication of the single medieval garden into many gardens. These retained their arbours, mounts and roses, but were rearranged to reflect the new ideals’.<sup>18</sup> David Jacques has examined this idea in more detail and in more practical terms, identifying the developments in design in Italy and France during the early sixteenth century as characterised by organisation of the garden into *compartimenti*, noting that medieval components continued to be nurtured within this tradition. He too attributes this development to late fifteenth-century Italian architects who became increasingly concerned with the garden area. The system they developed was one in which the garden was divided into a series of square compartments, each of which functioned as an autonomous design unit, yet which could also be appreciated together, usually in groups of four or eight, to make a symmetrical and harmonious whole.<sup>19</sup> This can be seen in the engraving of Villa d’Este referred to above,

---

<sup>17</sup> An rare and early example of this concept being utilised in England in the 1580s was the building of Wollaton Hall in Nottinghamshire, the home of Sir Francis Willoughby, designed by the mason-architect Robert Smythson, whose extant drawings of his original design show clearly that the garden was to be incorporated along with the house into an overall geometrical and symmetrical order: See Henderson, *Tudor House and Garden*, p. 21. Also Alice T. Friedman, *House and Household in Elizabethan England: Wollaton Hall and the Willoughby Family* (London, 1989), p. 148

<sup>18</sup> Strong, *The Renaissance Garden in England*, p. 15

<sup>19</sup> Jacques, ‘The *Compartiment System*’, p. 32

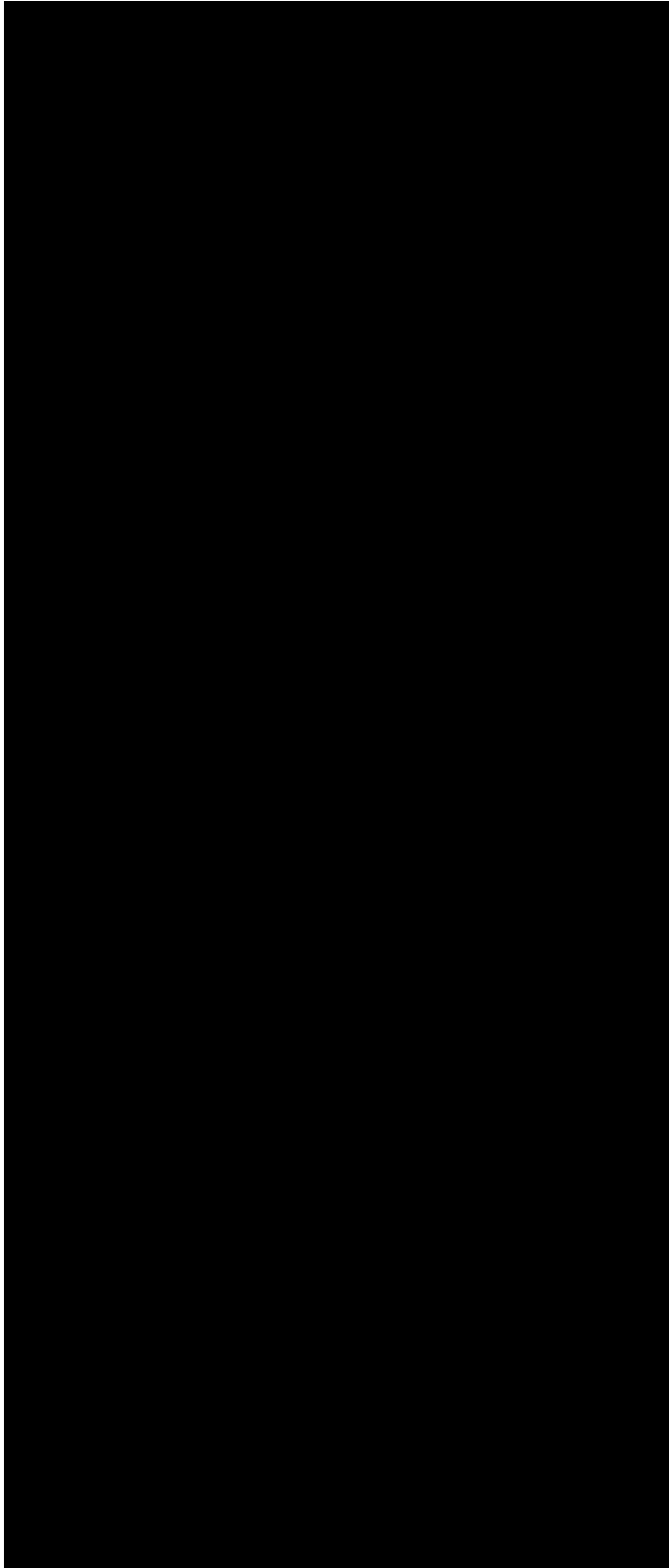
but perhaps even more clearly in the fabulous drawings of the architect, Jacques Androuet du Cerceau in his volume published in 1576 *Les Plus Excellents Bastiments de France*.

Here we can see the ordered symmetry of the compartments creating a unified whole, but also that the actual design and purpose of each bed is subject to almost infinite variety: from the intricate swirling patterns, circles, oblongs and squares the *compartiments* of the Jardin de Valleri, which appears to be an entirely ornamental garden, to the slightly less extravagant labyrinths and varied layouts of what are clearly more utilitarian garden areas at Montargis. (Figures 13 and 14 over)

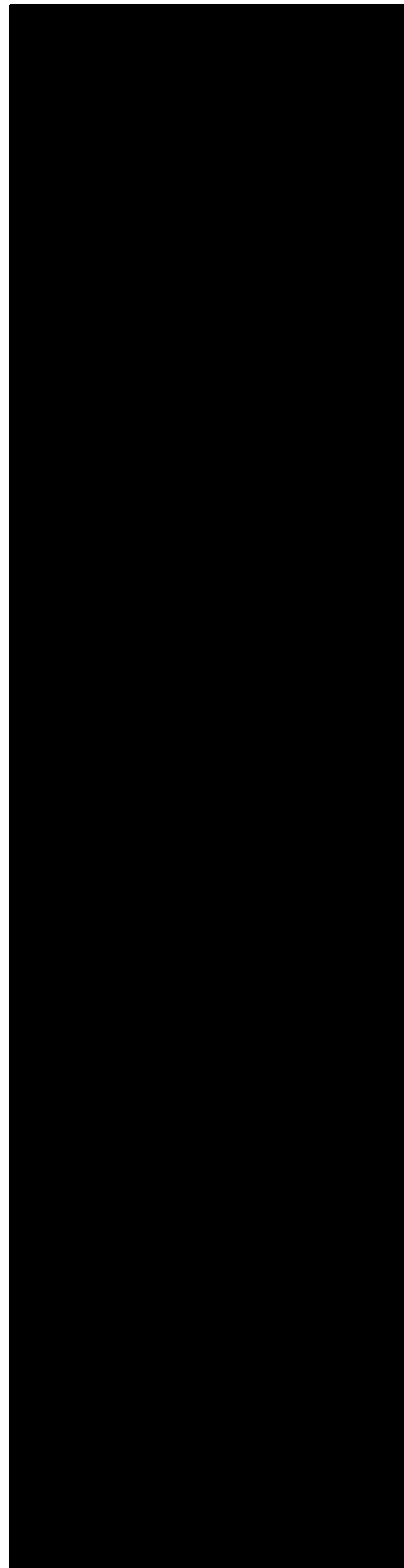
Turning now to English gardens of the same period, a number of observations can be made. The first is that, unlike their Italian and French counterparts, very few Elizabethan gardens have been recorded in detail by artists or surveyors, and we have to rely for the most part on maps, such as the so-called ‘Agas’ map of London, a few outline plans for gardens, such as those by the Elizabethan mason and architect, Robert Smythson, a couple of sketches of London palaces by Anthonis van den Wyngaerde and that which can be gleaned from the backgrounds of contemporary portrait paintings.<sup>20</sup> What becomes immediately obvious is that the sophisticated geometrical designs for gardens had yet to cross the channel – there is no evidence for anything like the intricate patterns depicted in du Cerceau’s drawings for instance. However, there is some indication that the idea of arranging gardens into compartments was beginning to be adopted. A study of the ‘Agas’ map of London, c.1561, reveals that whilst most gardens simply had a somewhat haphazard arrangement of regular beds dictated by the size and shape of the plot available, much as can be seen in the artisan’s gardens on the map of Wilton (Figure 11 above), some of

---

<sup>20</sup> See for instance *Thomas More and family* (Figure 72, p. 391) or *Sir Thomas Lucy and his Family* (Figure 81, p. 397)



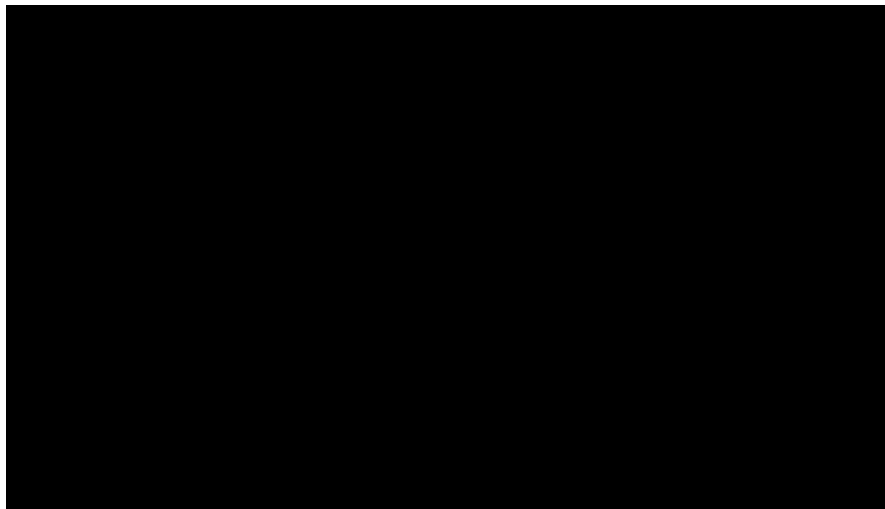
**Figure 13** *Jardin de Valleri*, Jacques du Cerceau



**Figure 14** *Montargis*, Jacques du Cerceau

Both illustrations from Jacques Androuet du Cerceau, *Le Premier Volume des plus excellent Bastiments de France* (Paris, 1576)

the more sophisticated residences, for instance Somerset House, Arundel House and Paget House along the Strand or Ely Place, the London house of the Bishops of Ely, already had their gardens divided into compartments, or quarters, as they were known in England. **Figure 15** clearly shows the compartmented garden at Ely Place, in contrast to the garden of Grays Inn, which is not:



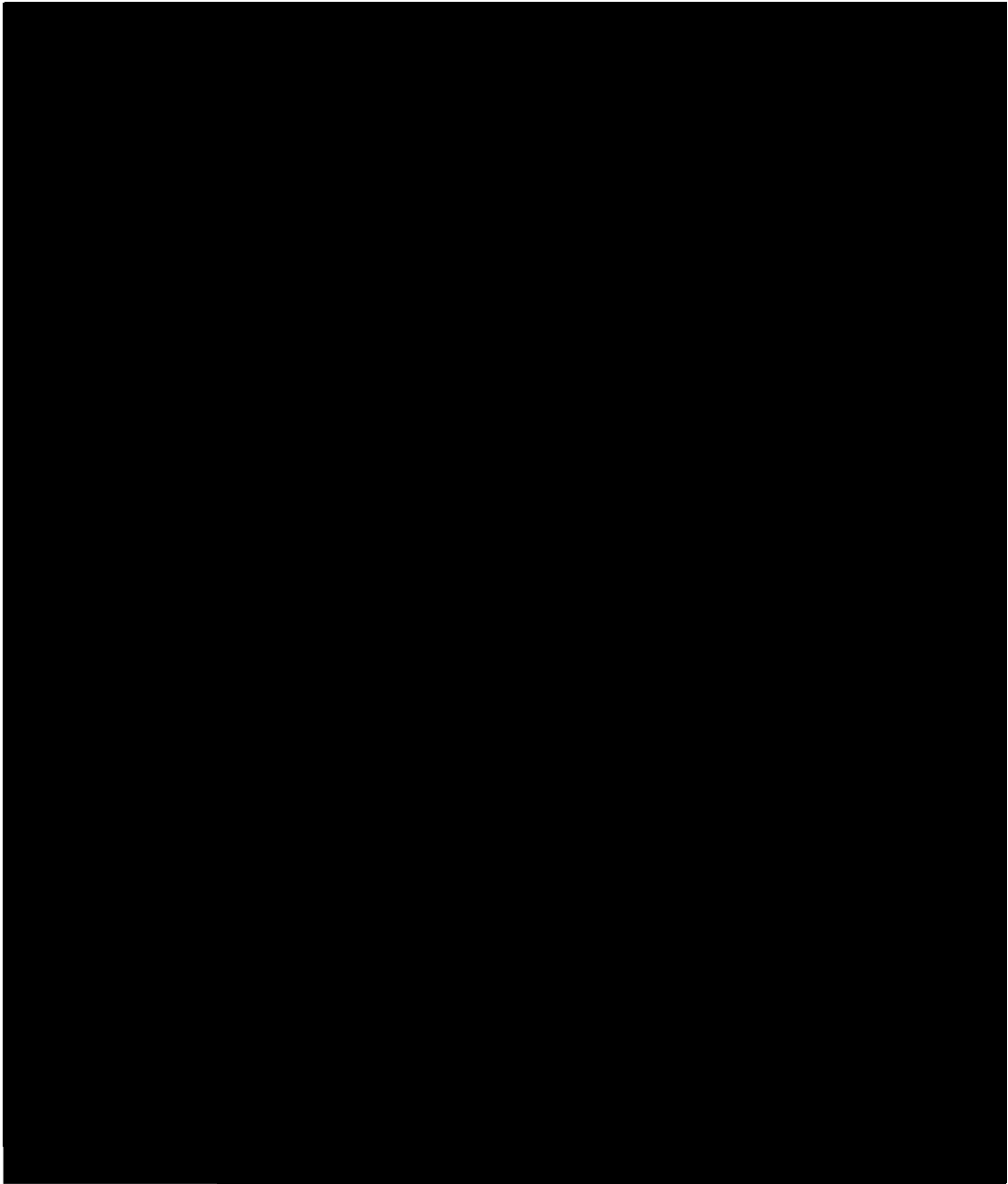
**Figure 15** Detail of the 'Agas' Map of London, c.1561  
City of London, Guildhall Library.  
Annotated by the author.

A plan of William Cecil's house on the Strand also shows the main part of the garden divided into four squares, with a fifth walled square to one side enclosing a mount.<sup>21</sup> In another part of London, just outside Bishopsgate and shown in detail on the Copperplate map of London, c.1557, (**Figure 16** over) we see that the Giardin di Pietro, in common with most other London gardens, has a random arrangement of oblong beds, whilst the grounds at St Mary's Spittel show areas clearly divided into compartments or quarters.

---

<sup>21</sup> Henderson, *Tudor House and Garden*, p. 10





**Figure 16 Detail from the Copperplate Map of London, c.1557**  
City of London, Guildhall Library.  
Annotated by the author.

A series of sketches executed by Anthonis van den Wyngaerde around 1560 show compartments in the vast gardens of Hampton Court, divided by alleys and enclosed by rails, as well as in the gardens of Richmond Palace.<sup>22</sup> From this evidence, it would seem that at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign the idea of compartments, evidenced in Italy at the beginning of the century and perfected in France by mid-century was now beginning to be adopted in the gardens of the English court elite. Jacques claims that by the 1580s 'the system was well entrenched' although the evidence, such as it is, still limits it to the houses of the elite: Jacques cites Wimbledon Manor as an example, and a survey of Toddington Manor dated 1581 shows the 'great garden' divided into nine compartments, and the 'little garden' into four.<sup>23</sup>

That the concept was eventually taken up more generally in the gardens of England is evidenced in the garden literature referred to at the beginning of this chapter. As mentioned, although these books were not published until the early years of the seventeenth century, they were written by authors who had lived and gardened throughout the latter years of the previous century and were therefore reflecting accepted practice at that time. In most cases, the writers seem to take for granted the general layout of the garden, not suggesting anything new or radically different, but describing what appeared to be the norm. Although not prescriptive in his advice, William Lawson observes that 'The form that men like in generall, is a square' for 'that principle is good' and he continues from this assumption, for instance suggesting that mounts should be placed at the corners, as shown in the garden plan included in his book – corners, of course, necessarily implying

---

<sup>22</sup> Henderson, *Tudor House and Garden*, pp. 78, 76

<sup>23</sup> Jacques, 'The Compartment System', p. 36; Henderson, *Tudor House and Garden*, p. 5

squares.<sup>24</sup> John Parkinson has much the same approach: after a brief review of the variety of possible forms – orbicular, round or triangular for instance, he concludes that ‘The foure square forme is the most usually accepted with all’.<sup>25</sup>

The earlier Elizabethan garden author Thomas Hyll does not really talk about the form of the garden in the same way as his successors.<sup>26</sup> Although he does describe the layout of a garden bed, it is in much more practical terms:

The beds also ought [...] to be trodden out narrow ... and the pathes of these of a seemly breadth, for the easier reaching into the middle of the beds, or at the least freelier, to the furtherance and speed of the weeders.<sup>27</sup>

This highlights a further point about the form of the garden which can be identified by comparing the authors mentioned above. Hyll reminds us here of the practical nature of gardening, a factor which must never be forgotten in the creation of any garden. Narrow garden beds, such as those shown in the maps of London and Wilton above, were designed to be reached easily from paths on either side and, as Hyll reminds us, would speed up the tending of the garden, particularly important with the rapid turnover of vegetable crops, many of which would have been planted and harvested within a matter of weeks. The form is dictated by the purpose. What appears to have changed by the end of the century however is the introduction of a consideration of aesthetics. William Lawson, the practical

---

<sup>24</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, pp. 11 [45], 54 [88]

<sup>25</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 3. Interestingly, Parkinson also appears to be the first author to refer to ‘compartiments’ (*Paradisi*, p. 5), although of course it was 1629 before this first recorded usage of the word in the context of English gardens was used.

<sup>26</sup> Although the frontispiece of his first book, published c. 1558, does carry a woodcut drawing of a square ornamental garden, replaced in a later publication with an illustration of gardeners working in a series of raised square or rectilinear beds, as will be discussed in Chapter 3, illustrations in books were generally little to do with the author, but were instead added by the printer from a variety of sources.

<sup>27</sup> Thomas Hyll, *The Gardener’s Labyrinth* (1577) ed. by Richard Mabey (Oxford, 1988), p. 48

northern gardener, simply notes that ‘the eye must be pleased with the form’.<sup>28</sup> Gervase Markham and John Parkinson however, take this idea further and for them it would appear that the orderly form of the garden is an inherent aspect of its beauty. Markham devotes two chapters of his book to how to ‘beautifie the garden’, in which he explains in minute detail how to lay out the squares, alleys, walks and quarters. He advocates the use of gravel and sand for the alleys, walks and for in-filling the knots in the quarters because it is easier to keep them neat and tidy, without the inconvenience of ‘any grasse or greene thing to grow within them, which is disgraceful’. For Markham, beauty is found in the symmetrically ordered formality of straight lines and geometric shapes; plants and flowers are barely mentioned at all. He briefly reviews plants which are suitable for bordering knots – slow-growing evergreen shrubs such as privet (he calls it ‘Primpe’), box, lavender or rosemary which can be kept clipped to a precise neatness, and then in a final short paragraph at the end of this section he mentions the ‘most quaint, rare’ practice of planting flowers in the garden! Even then, they should be planted in blocks of ‘one kinde and colour’.<sup>29</sup> The disadvantage of this method of filling the garden with colour is that it will not last the whole year – flowers by their very nature have a habit of blooming, fading and dying, flopping over, spreading and generally behaving in an unruly and disorderly fashion.<sup>30</sup> However, although for Markham the emphasis seems instead to be very much on creating a permanent structural garden which can be kept in order without these inconveniences, this is not a view reflected by all our garden writers and, one presumes, not one necessarily adhered to by all gardeners.

---

<sup>28</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, p. 11

<sup>29</sup> Markham, *English Husbandman*, pp. 116-126

<sup>30</sup> David Jacques has noted that the development of the compartmented system in gardens (discussed above, p.11) ‘is best seen as a new concern for order and harmony’: Jacques, ‘The *Compartment* System’, p. 36

Parkinson agrees that the beauty is in the form ‘as the beauty thereof may be no lesse than the foure square proportion’, suggesting a symmetrical arrangement of the placing of arbours at the corners, a fountain in the middle and ‘convenient roome for allies and walkes’. However, unlike Markham, he does not see flowers as quite such an untidy inconvenience, noting rather that the alleys between the squares should be wide enough to prevent harm to herbs and flowers that might be growing by the sides of the paths and therefore be knocked by passers-by – he also notes that wider paths will make life easier for the weeders to ‘cleanse both the beds and the allies’.<sup>31</sup> By contrast, Francis Bacon, whilst agreeing with his contemporaries that a garden is best to be square, with fair alleys and stately hedges, nevertheless radically suggests that the alleys, far from being kept clear of any encroaching plants, should instead be planted with them:

But those [plants] which Perfume the Aire most delightfully, not passed by as the rest, but being trodden on and crushed are Three: That is Burnet, Wilde-Time, and Water-mints. Therefore you are to set whole Allies of them, to have the Pleasure, when you walke or tread.<sup>32</sup>

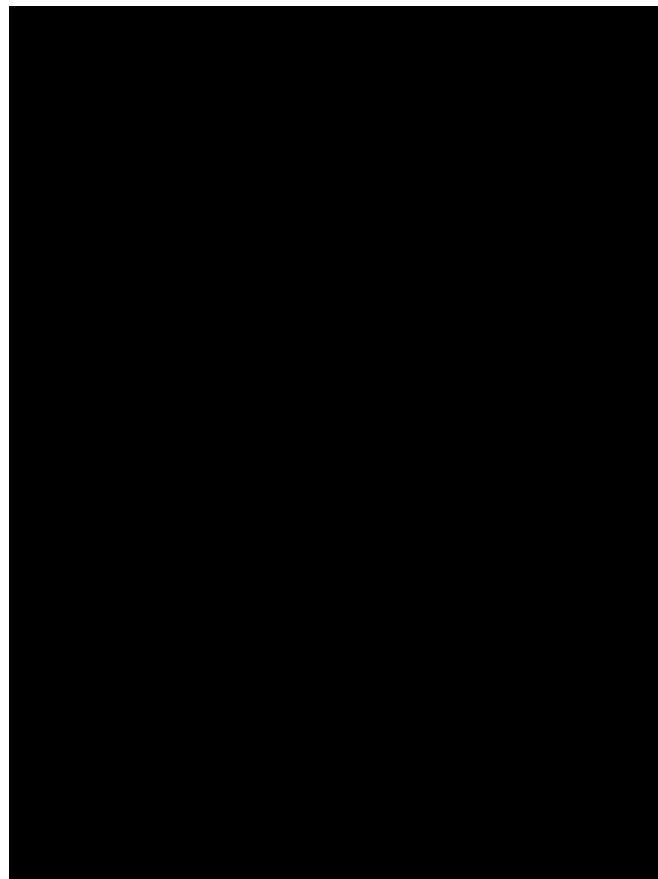
However, whilst it is unlikely that Bacon was the only early modern gardener to apparently flout the rules and appreciate plants in this way, enough has been said here to show that the four square form was generally accepted as being the ideal basis for a sixteenth or early seventeenth-century garden layout. The idea of the basic form of the Italian and French renaissance *compartiment* appears to have been adopted, if not yet the detail.

---

<sup>31</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 5

<sup>32</sup> *Of Gardens*, p. 52

Adopted, that is, by those who had the resources to overcome the limitations of site and situation and create exactly the garden they wanted. The reality of course was that most people had to make do with what they had ‘because a more large or convenient cannot be had’,<sup>33</sup> although Parkinson does point out that even if the ground on which the garden is to be laid out is not of the correct proportions, it ‘may soon brought to the square forme’ by the judicious positioning of walks, alleys, squares and knots. An example of this could be the garden of the Clothworkers’ Hall in London, where the very irregularly shaped piece of ground is ‘squared up’ with the careful placing of the two knots.

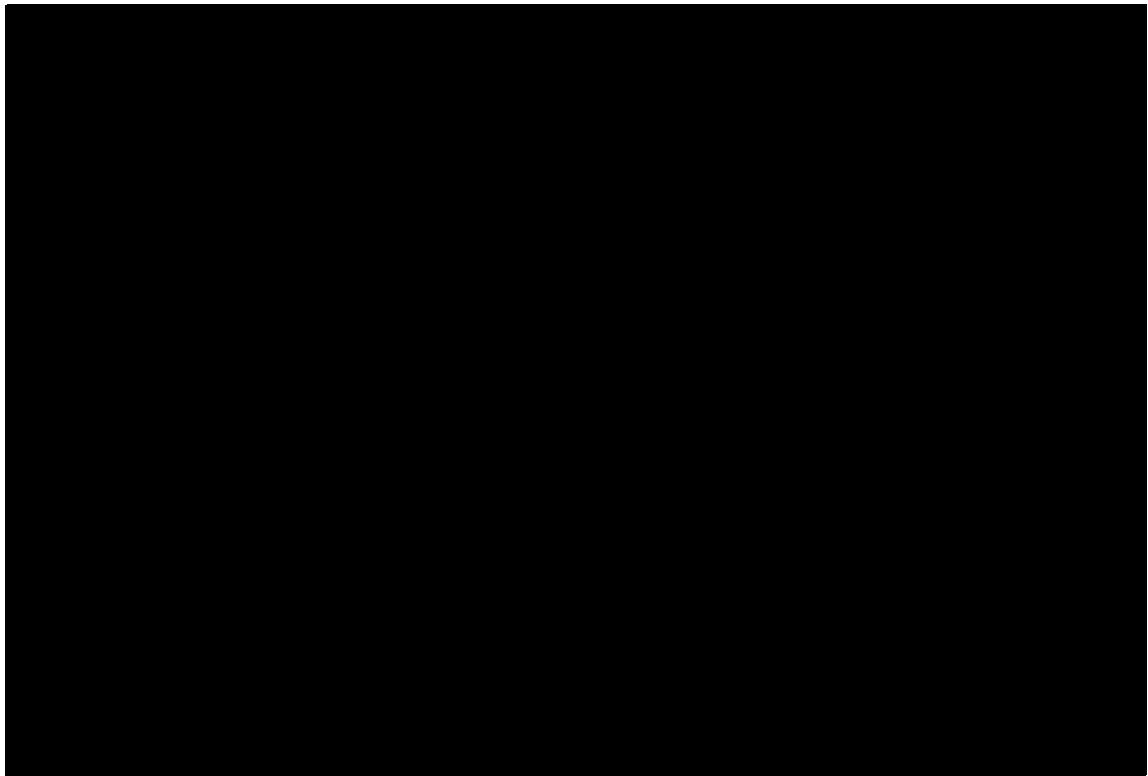


**Figure 17 Clothworkers' Hall, Mincing Lane, London**  
from Ralph Treswell, *Survaye of all the Landes and Tenements*  
*belonginge to the Worshipfull Company of the Clothworkers of London*,  
(London, 1612)

---

<sup>33</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 3

This plan is one of a collection of surveys of London properties carried out in the early years of the seventeenth century by Ralph Treswell, recently collated and published in a single volume by John Schofield.<sup>34</sup> There are fifty three plans in all, of which seventeen show gardens and there is little evidence of their conforming to the ‘ideal’ form. One of the larger properties, belonging to Sir Edward Darcy on Billeter Lane, has two gardens:



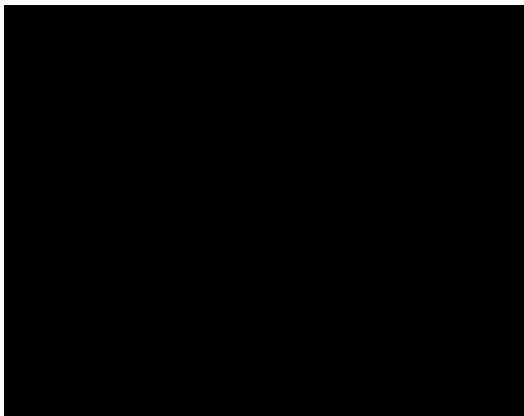
**Figure 18 Sir Edward Darcy's Garden, 12-14 Billiter Street, London**  
detail from Treswell, *Surveye*

In one at least, an attempt has been made to lay out the garden in a regular form – it is square and set regularly with trees, but the other is an irregular-shaped piece of land which takes up the remaining available space between neighbouring properties. In a city in which space was at a premium, it is hardly surprising to find that this is a common feature of

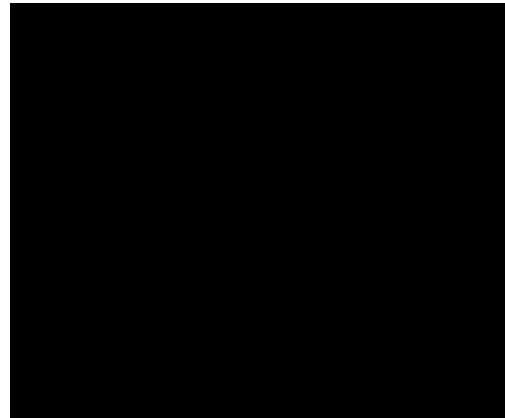
---

<sup>34</sup> *The London Surveys of Ralph Treswell*, ed. by John Schofield (London: London Topographical Society, 1987). The illustrations here are provided by The Clothworkers' Company Archive, London.

London gardens. As already discussed, some of the elite properties along the Strand for instance did have large compartmented gardens with knots, fountains, walks and alleys conforming to the ideal, but other garden owners, such as Mr Beastney or Robert Wood had to be content with small irregular plots, limited by their surroundings – the City Wall in the case of the former and the ditches of East Smithfield in the latter.



**Figure 19** Mr Beastney's garden under the City walls, Monkswell Street, London from Treswell, *Surveye*



**Figure 20** Robert Wood's garden, 4-18 Lower East Smithfield, London from Treswell, *Surveye*

With the best will in the world, there is little scope here for the ‘four square forme’. However, whilst always remembering the limitations imposed by economic circumstances or the environment, and that there will always be exceptions such as those illustrated above in the case of London, it is nevertheless possible to maintain that the general aspiration was for a regular, ordered, four square layout of gardens.

Having established this, and reminding ourselves of the views expressed by seventeenth-century authors at the beginning of this chapter that the details of the garden can be left to the gardener’s own devices, it now remains to try and discover something of what those devices were. What were the uses of the gardens? What did they contain and how were the



contents arranged? What new practices were being carried out in order to create and maintain them?

Given the paucity of information on 'ordinary' Elizabethan gardens and the predilection of secondary material to concentrate on the ornamental and aesthetic aspects of gardens, it is easy to overlook the fact that the main purpose of any garden was primarily an area in which to produce food to maintain the household. This could be a small plot around a peasant cottage to provide vegetables for the family,<sup>35</sup> or on a much grander scale, to provide not only vegetables, but fruit and livestock such as pigeons, rabbits, fish and, for the very wealthy, venison: not just to feed the entire household, but also to demonstrate the owner's social standing in the community through his abundant gifts and hospitality.<sup>36</sup> As was noted earlier in the discussion on Medieval gardens, it was only the wealthy who could afford the luxury of a purely ornamental garden, and even then it would have been in addition to a productive garden. This situation must have continued into the Elizabethan era and the reason, for instance, that we only see ornamental gardens depicted in portraits and paintings is *because* they were new and fashionable, *because* they were indicative of the owner's social standing and because, not to put too fine a point on it, they were more aesthetically pleasing than the cabbage patch. Also of course, most of the extant evidence of any sort relates almost exclusively to the houses of royalty and aristocracy, where the

---

<sup>35</sup> See Dyer, 'Gardens and Garden Produce', p. 29

<sup>36</sup> See for instance Austen, *Treatise of Fruit-Trees*, p. 33: 'One way to gaine, and keep a good name is by Gifts and Benefits: the worst temper of minds are wonne, and held by Gifts and good turns, it's naturall to all creatures to love those that do them good. Now who can so easily give so great, so many, and so acceptable gifts as the husbandman that yearly nurseth up multitudes of Fruit-trees, and hath store of pleasant fruits, wines and delicates made of them.'; or Sir John Oglander who recommends 'a small warren for some rabbits when thy friends come. Build a pigeon house and fit up a fishpond or two that at all times thou mayest have provisions at hand.'; Bamford, *A Royalist's Notebook*, p. 203. For more on hospitality see Felicity Heal, 'The Idea of Hospitality in Early Modern England', *Past and Present*, 102 (1984), 66-93

ornamental and privy gardens were clearly of great importance. Evidence of the utilitarian nature of gardens however is implicit in a number of other documentary sources.

For instance, Thomas Hyll's *The Gardener's Labyrinth* (1577) is a practical guide on how and what to plant in a garden, concerned with the cultivation of what he calls 'hearbs and roots of the Kitchin',<sup>37</sup> in which he includes vegetables such as cabbage, leeks, onions, spinach, beets and, more unusually, melons, gourds and cucumbers;<sup>38</sup> what we might call flavouring herbs such as rocket, parsley, chervil, dill and mint, as well as 'divers Physick herbs' such as gentian, harts-tongue, selfe-heal and lung-wort used 'in curing sundry griefes'.<sup>39</sup> Although he does mention some 'delectable' and 'pleasaunte floures' such as marigolds, columbine, lavender, gilliflowers, pinks and carnations, these are all grown along with the other herbs already mentioned and they too have their uses: 'to beautifie and refresh the house'.<sup>40</sup> The essential role of scented plants and flowers in over-coming ever-present and less pleasant odours is easily overlooked in our sanitised times. It also serves

---

<sup>37</sup> At this time, the word 'herb' had a much broader definition than now, encompassing all herbaceous plants, that is, any flowering plant that was not a shrub or a tree, rather than the narrower definition used today which is limited to specific plants used in some way for their scent or flavour: Helen Leach, *Cultivating Myths: Fiction, Fact and Fashion in Garden History* (Auckland: Random House, 2000), p. 26; *OED Online*.

<sup>38</sup> This may seem an unusually exotic range of produce to be growing in ordinary gardens, but it appears that the cultivation of melons, cucumbers, pompions and gourds was commonplace: cucumbers had been grown in England since at least AD995, purchase of seeds appear in the accounts of the Archbishop of Canterbury's gardener at Lambeth for 1322 and notes on its cultivation appear in an instruction manual on planting a kitchen garden written 'for the helpe and comfort of poore people' by Richard Gardiner of Shrewsbury in 1603; in his *Herball* of 1597, John Gerard describes and illustrates seven kinds of cucumber, four kinds of melon, seven kinds of pompions and two types of gourd: Maggie Campbell-Culver, *The Origin of Plants* (London, 2004), pp. 36-7; John Harvey, 'Vegetables in the Middle Ages', *Garden History*, 12:2 (1984) pp. 89-99 (p. 94); Richard Gardiner, *Profitable Instructions for the Manuring, sowing and planting of Kitchin Gardens* (London, 1599), sig. C4; Gerard, *Herball*, pp. 762-778. These fruits all belong to the same botanical family and grow on a similar looking plant, but produce a wide variety of fruits 'differing very notable in shape and proportion, as also in taste' (*Herball*, p. 770). They are referred to by contemporary authors almost interchangeably, Gerard for instance noting that 'doubtless the Muske Melon is a kinde of Cucumber' (*Herball*, p. 770). Pompions were probably what we now call pumpkins, and maybe also included marrow and courgette varieties, although these terms are never used. Despite the various terms used to describe them, evidence suggests that a wide range of different types of this plant being grown in early modern gardens.

<sup>39</sup> Hyll, *Gardeners Labyrinth* (1577), pp. 29-30

<sup>40</sup> Hyll, *Gardeners Labyrinth* (1577), pp. 36,28

as a reminder that the utilitarian garden will always have flowers, because all plants, whether they be herbs, medicinal plants, salads, vegetables or fruit trees, will inevitably produce flowers as part of their natural life-cycle: the presence of flowers in a garden is not necessarily, as seems to be often assumed, synonymous only with the pleasure garden.

Further evidence for the ubiquity of the utilitarian garden can be found in a contemporary account of Elizabethan life, William Harrison's *Description of England*, first published in 1577. As a rural clergyman, he speaks as an ordinary Elizabethan about the ordinary things of life, or as a recent editor of his works puts it, he comes 'exceptionally close to that elusive aspect in the study of the past, what common people thought about common things'.<sup>41</sup> In it he describes every aspect of the society in which he lived, including a section on gardens and orchards, which raises a number of interesting points. The first is that he has nothing at all to say about the form of gardens, so perhaps after all and as suggested elsewhere, it wasn't necessarily that important to the ordinary gardener. He also reaffirms that in the gardens of the 'poor commons', you will find growing 'melons, pompions, gourds, cucumbers, radishes, skirrets, parsnips, carrots, cabbages, navews, turnips and all kinds of salad herbs'— much the same, in fact, as the contents of Thomas Hyll's garden. Harrison also observes that this same produce is being 'fed upon as dainty dishes at the tables of delicate merchants, gentlemen and the nobility', implying that the same kind of garden produce is being grown and consumed right across the social strata.<sup>42</sup> John Harvey, in his study of medieval gardens, also observes that peas, beans, cabbage, carrots and turnips were staples of the national diet and Chris Dyer agrees that garden

---

<sup>41</sup> Harrison, *Description of England*, p. xxxv

<sup>42</sup> Harrison, *Description of England*, p. 264

vegetables provided the whole population with some proportion at least of their diet.<sup>43</sup>

There is no reason to believe that this situation would have changed much by Harrison's time, and indeed, study of household accounts show that this was still the case well into the seventeenth century.<sup>44</sup>

Of course, what was different as we move up through the social ranks, and as identified by Harrison, was that gardens contained more than just vegetables and herbs:

If you look into our gardens annexed to our houses, how wonderfully is their beauty increased, not only with flowers ... and a variety of curious and costly workmanship, but also with rare and medicinal herbs sought up in the land within these forty years; so that in comparison of this present the ancient gardens were but dunghills and laystows<sup>45</sup> to such as did possess them.<sup>46</sup>

And later he writes:

And even as it fareth with our gardens, so doth it with our orchards, which were never furnished with so good fruit nor with such variety as at this present. For besides that we have most delicate apples, plums, pears, walnuts, filberts, etc., and those of sundry sorts, planted within forty years past, in comparison of which most of the old trees are nothing worth, so have we no less store of strange fruit, as apricots, almonds, peaches, figs, corn [cherry] trees in noblemen's orchards.<sup>47</sup>

---

<sup>43</sup> Harvey, 'Vegetables in the Middle Ages'; Dyer, 'Gardens and Garden Produce', p. 28

<sup>44</sup> To be examined in more detail later, see pp. 139-40

<sup>45</sup> Laystows or leystalls, were areas where the refuse and dung 'the soyle of the hole paryshe' were collected. One of the reasons given in support of the petition for the formation of the Company of Gardeners presented to the Lord Mayor of London in 1606 was that gardeners played a valuable role in taking 'awaie the dung and noysomenes of the cittie' to fertilise their garden plots. Malcolm Thick has noted that the wagons and boats that brought garden produce to the city markets would have been unlikely to leave empty: *OED Online*; City of London, Guildhall Library, Records of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners, MS3389/2; Malcolm Thick, *The Neat House Gardens: Early Market Gardening around London* (Totnes: Prospect Books, 1998), p. 102

<sup>46</sup> Harrison, *Description of England*, p. 265

<sup>47</sup> Harrison, *Description of England*, p. 269

These paragraphs raise a number of points, perhaps the most important to remind us once again that the orchard was an essential part of any garden that was more than the most basic of plots. There is abundant evidence to support this view – many of the illustrations used in this chapter indicate the presence of fruit trees or at least an orderly arrangement of trees set out as an orchard. The setting up and maintenance of an orchard is the major subject of William Lawson's book, and the earlier work by Elizabethan author, Leonard Mascall, *A Booke of the Arte and maner, how to plant and graffe all sortes of trees* (1572) is also concerned almost exclusively with, as the title suggests, the cultivation of fruit trees.

Like vegetables, fruit formed a major part of the foodstuffs produced within the household, but unlike vegetables, it was probably not absolutely essential. What it offered was variety, sweetness, seasonality and even colour to what was otherwise a fairly monotonous diet. However, to grow fruit implies a degree of wealth above subsistence level – at the very least, fruit trees take up more space, so a larger plot of land would be required. Fruit trees take a number of years to nurture to maturity, and they will only produce one crop of fruit a year. They are more vulnerable to frosts and bad weather and require more skill and care to look after them. All this requires a degree of time, effort and money and to be able to place a bowl of fruit on the table, as well as offering diversity and ornament, was also a display of the wealth, status and hospitality of the host. The esteem in which fruit was held is also indicated by its role as a gift. For instance, in 1599 John Wynn of Gwydir sent a basket of plums to Sir Richard Bulkley of Beaumaris, apparently

in return for the ‘hogshead of Graves wine’ sent by Sir Richard the week before.<sup>48</sup>

But even among fruit growers and gift-givers, there was still a degree of hierarchy involved. As indicated by Harrison’s *Description*, there were several categories of fruit trees – those native to this land, which could be found in any orchard in England, such as apples, pears, plums and various varieties of nuts. These require the degree of cultivation referred to above, but did not need any special conditions – anyone with the space and time could grow them. However, by Harrison’s time, new and exotic fruits were being introduced from abroad – he mentions apricots, almonds, peaches and figs being cultivated in the orchards of noblemen. These required considerably more resources to be grown successfully, although there is precious little information regarding how they actually achieved this. William Lawson, although ruling out the possibility of even trying to grow such fruits in the north of England where he lived and gardened, does nevertheless describe how apricots, peaches and cherries are grown against walls ‘to have the benefit of the immoderate reflex of the Sun, which is commendable, for the having of fair, good, and soone ripe fruit’. This was clearly a common practice in some areas of the country, because Lawson then goes on to disagree with it on a number of counts.<sup>49</sup>

In 1595, Robert Sydney writes to his wife at their home in Kent: ‘Sweetheart. I pray you remember to send to Jacques, the gardener, to come to Penshurst against Alhalowtyde, and to bring yellow peaches, apricots, cherry and plum trees to set along the wall towards the church’. This was clearly a successful enterprise, because over the following years

---

<sup>48</sup> *Calendar of Wynn (of Gwydir) Papers* (Aberystwyth: National Library of Wales, 1926), **205**, p. 37. For more on food as gifts, see Felicity Heal, ‘Food Gifts, The Household and the Politics of Exchange in Early Modern England’, *Past and Present*, 199 (2008), 41-70. In this article, Heal questions why it should be that whilst apples and pears seem an acceptable gift, vegetables do not. Perhaps one answer could be that whilst vegetables are cheap and easy to grow, this is not, as indicated above, the case with apples and pears.

<sup>49</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, pp. 3[37], 7[41]

there are many mentions in his letters to his wife of the fruit thereby produced: ‘I thanck you for your peaches, of which the King and Queen, my Lord of Suffolk and my Lord of Worcester had the most part of’; ‘the apricots and also the cherries are very fayre and I will divide them according to your desire’; ‘the King had the cherries you sent and hee had not had then any so fayre as they were’.<sup>50</sup> The prestige gained from being able to please a person no less than the King with such a gift cannot be underestimated.

The building of walled fruit gardens, thereby creating a conducive microclimate for the growing of such fruits, appears to be the main method by which this was achieved at this time. Indeed, Sydney’s estate manager Thomas Goldyne reports that in one particularly cold year ‘the long easterly wyndes and the late straunge frosts have taken all [the fruit] awaye againe, especially all suche as are generall in orchardes and stand abroad from the walls.’ However, in the walled garden at Penshurst ‘there were never more Appricockes, Mellicotoones and peaches’.<sup>51</sup>

That people were able to grow such fruits as these, which have long gone from our gardens, is the subject of much debate, especially as evidence indicates that the climate

---

<sup>50</sup> HMC, *De L’Isle MSS*, II, Sir Robert Sydney to Lady Sydney, 25 September 1595, p. 164; IV, Viscount Lisle to Lady Lisle, 3 October 1608, p. 48; 8 July 1609, p. 138; V, Viscount Lisle to Viscountess Lisle, 15 June 1615, p. 299

<sup>51</sup> HMC, *De L’Isle MSS*, IV, Thomas Goldyne to Viscount Lisle, 6 May 1611, p. 266

was in fact cooler during this period than now.<sup>52</sup> However, the situation was very different. It has already been noted that considerable time, effort and expense needed to be invested in the cultivation of these fruits, but those who were in a position to do so did just that, because this was the only way to obtain them. Nowadays, it is more economic to simply import such fruits from sunnier climes. Our Elizabethan predecessors had no such alternative available to them.

Finally on this point, Harrison also makes mention of ‘capers, oranges and lemons ... beside other strange trees brought from far whose names I know not’. These tender trees would have required special protection indeed to thrive in this country, so it is fascinating to try and discover how they might have succeeded. Sir Robert Sydney’s father, Sir Henry, paid out £1 6s 8d in 1574 ‘for making the hotehous’.<sup>53</sup> Frustratingly, there is no further information, apart from the fact that this was clearly part of a major rebuilding programme of the house and gardens at the family home at Penshurst in Kent. Much is made too of a famous orange-house at Beddington in Surrey, the home of Sir Francis Carew, who acquired the property in 1554. It appears that Carew purchased the trees in

---

<sup>52</sup> The term ‘The Little Ice Age’ was first introduced in 1939 to describe the much debated period, variously defined as somewhere between the years 1300-1850, climaxing during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when a marked cooling of the climate was observed and measured: Brian Fagan, *The Little Ice Age: How Climate Made History 1300 – 1800* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), pp. 47-8. Herbert Lamb states that a sharp change in the climate occurred in the middle of the sixteenth century which lasted around 150 years, with evidence from all parts of the world indicating a colder regime and Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie concludes that a large-scale series of cold winters from 1540 onwards is an undeniable fact. However, both agree that although a long-term trend can be identified, there were significant variations both from year to year and from one group of a few years to the next: Herbert Lamb, *Climate, History and the Modern World*, (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 202; Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie ‘History and Climate’ in *Economy and Society in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Peter Burke (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), pp. 134-169. Whilst historians debate however, perhaps contemporary evidence is more telling: John Parkinson notes in 1629 that the planting of vines is ‘fruitlesse labour’ because ‘our years in these times do not fal out to be so kindly and hot, to ripen the grapes’ (*Paradisi*, p. 553); Christopher Browne wrote from Sayes Court in 1642 that ‘I have gathered one rype fig, but as for apples we shall have none at all this year, and the season hath continued so cold that our grapes ... are altogether [?greene] and skarse’: BL, Evelyn, Add. 78220

<sup>53</sup> HMC, *De L'Isle MSS*, I, Accounts of Sir Henry Sydney, p. 258



1562, but there is no mention of the orange-house until 1608, despite the existence of records for much of the intervening period. The assumption has been that the orange-house must have been built soon after the arrival of the trees, because otherwise the trees would not have survived, but there is also evidence that the trees were planted in the ground and protected with temporary wooden coverings during the winter.<sup>54</sup> Another possibility is that the trees may not have survived at all, and that new ones were purchased for the orange-house. The fact remains however that Elizabethans were at least experimenting with these new and exotic plants.

However, it was not just exotic fruit varieties that were being introduced into gentlemen's gardens – an increasing range of 'out-landish' flowers and plants was also becoming available to gardeners in England. The wave of new plant introductions into Europe had begun with the great voyages of discovery by the Spanish and Portuguese towards the end of the previous century and by the Elizabethan era these plants were making their way to England. In her overview of the origin of plants in Britain, Maggie Culver-Smith lists ninety-two specific new varieties as being introduced into England in the sixteenth century, sixty-eight of them after 1560.<sup>55</sup> John Gerard, herbalist, surgeon, enthusiastic plantsman and gardener, is credited with compiling the first catalogue of garden plants in 1596, listing over 1000 varieties growing in his own garden. The following year, he published his famous *Herball*, almost 1400 folio pages containing 1800 illustrations. Amongst other information, he gives the provenance of each plant, many of which have

---

<sup>54</sup> Phillips and Burnett, 'The Chronology and layout of Francis Carew's Garden', p. 157. One hundred years later, following a visit to Beddington in 1658, John Evelyn refers in his diary to 'the first Orange garden of England', the trees now over-grown, but describing how they were 'planted in the ground & secured in winter with a wooden tabernacle and stoves': *The Diary of John Evelyn*, ed. by E.S.De Beer, 6 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1955), III, p. 221

<sup>55</sup> Culver-Smith, *The Origin of Plants*, pp.181-187

been brought from ‘forren places’, although at this point, even if they originated in the New World, they are all brought to England from Europe. For instance, Gerard writes of Indian Cresses:

The seedes of this rare and faire plant came first from the Indies into Spain [...] and from thence into France and Flanders, from whence I have received seede that borne with me both flowers and seede.<sup>56</sup>

or of the Marvel of Peru:

The seed of this strange plant was brought first into Spaine, from Peru [...] and since dispersed into all the parts of Europe: from which myself have planted many yeeres.<sup>57</sup>

It was to be the early years of the next century before exotic plants and seeds from beyond Europe were being brought directly by English adventurers to their native land.

However, apart from Gerard’s catalogue and *Herball*, we have very little evidence of what exotic plants and flowers were growing in the generality of gardens in England at this time and one suspects that Gerard was the exception rather than the rule – he was both an avid plant collector and an avid gardener. He frequently refers to his garden in London in the *Herball*: ‘I have them growing in my garden’ is a phrase he uses many times, often written with a detectable note of pride at his achievement:

Of Oleander: These grow in Italy, and other hot regions by rivers, and the seaside; I have them growing in *my garden*.<sup>58</sup>

And his reputation as a plantsman was widespread – he was employed by the great Elizabethan statesman Lord Burghley to superintend the planting of his new garden at Theobalds in the 1570s and 80s and it appears that he also worked in the garden of Cecil’s

---

<sup>56</sup> Gerard, *Herball*, p. 196

<sup>57</sup> Gerard, *Herball*, p. 273

<sup>58</sup> *Herball*, p. 1220 (my emphasis)

house in the Strand.<sup>59</sup> However, despite this, we know almost nothing about what was actually planted in these gardens. Of the various contemporary descriptions of Theobalds, it is its enormous size, the geometrically patterned layout and artificial devices that are commented upon, although one description does refer to ‘Tulipps, Lillies, Piannies and divers other sorts of flowers’, and another to a knot garden being ‘planted with choice flowers’.<sup>60</sup> It is of course perfectly possible that the paucity of information regarding flowers is due simply to the reporter, who may not have appreciated what exactly he was looking at and only named plants that he recognised, or he may not have been particularly interested, preferring instead to relate the more obviously ostentatious features of the gardens. Even the earliest and longest description we have of an Elizabethan garden, that written in a contemporary letter by Robert Langham describing the entertainment provided by the Earl of Leicester for the Queen in 1575 at Kenilworth Castle, although very detailed, has almost nothing to say about the flowers. He describes some planted around the obelisks:

also by great ... cost the sweetnes of savour on all sidez ... from the redolent plants and fragrant earbs and flooz, in foorm, cooler and quantitee so deliciously variaunt’<sup>61</sup>

Again, there is no further detail, although there clearly was an abundance of flowers in the garden. Whatever the reason however, the result is that we have precious little information to go on to try and recreate a picture of the place of flowers in the Elizabethan

---

<sup>59</sup> Strong, *The Renaissance Garden in England*, p. 52

<sup>60</sup> See for instance *The Diary of Baron Waldstein: A Traveller in Elizabethan England*, trans. by G.W. Groos (London: Thames and Hudson, c.1981), p. 87; Paul Hentzner, *A Journey into England 1598*, (first printed 1757, repr. Reading 1807), p. 28; Strong, *The Renaissance Garden in England*, pp. 52-3

<sup>61</sup> Kuin, *Robert Langham, A Letter*, p. 70. There is some debate over the authorship of this letter, although Kuin identifies the writer as Robert Langham ‘Keper of the Councell Chamber’ (p. 15). The recent reconstruction of the garden at Kenilworth Castle by English Heritage was based on the description given by Langham in this letter. For more on this, see Alexander Samson, ‘*Locus amoenus*: gardens and horticulture in the Renaissance’, *Renaissance Studies*, 25:1 (2011), 1-23 (p. 22)

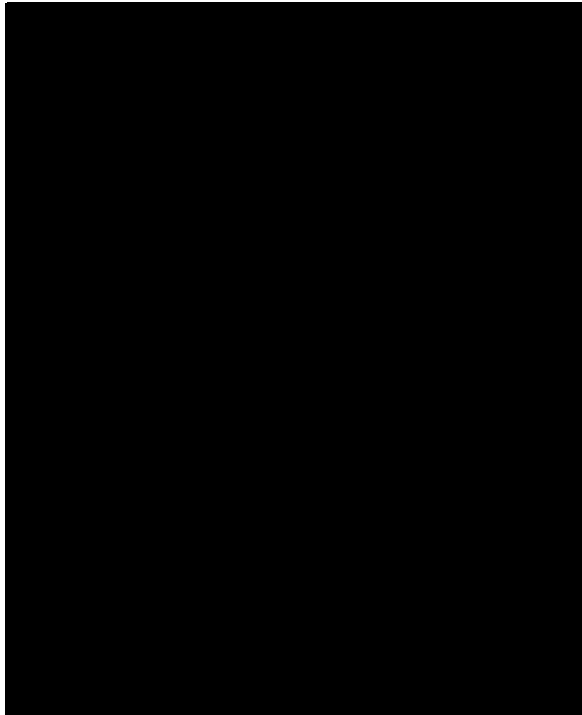
gentleman's garden. Both Burghley and Gerard were renowned for their enthusiastic interest in exotic flowers, so they hardly represent the norm. As already noted, Thomas Hyll devotes very little space in his book to ornamental flowers, and those he mentions are common: gilly-flowers, violets, lilies etc. William Harrison mentions flowers which increase the beauty of gardens 'sought up in this land within these forty years' but gives no examples. He 'boast[s] a little' that his own garden contains over three hundred varieties of herbs 'no one of them being common or usually to be had', but then goes on to say that this is incomparable to the gardens of Hampton Court, Nonsuch and Theobalds, reinforcing the idea that these gardens were clearly exceptional.<sup>62</sup> It is difficult to escape the conclusion that although Elizabethan gardens undoubtedly contained flowers, this was not the primary preoccupation of most gardeners. Where the luxury of beauty and ornamentation was present in a garden, this was to be found in the ordered form and structure. It was to be the following century before the creation of the purely ornamental flower garden came to the fore.

Having said all this, what then do we know of what was added to Elizabethan gardens by way of ornament? After discussing the beauty to be found in the order of the trees themselves, William Lawson briefly lists other artificial ornaments including mounts, seats, the 'shape of men and beasts' – here he is talking about topiary rather than statuary, mazes, conduits or fountains, rivers and moats. All these would have been found in abundance in the great gardens of the aristocracy: Roy Strong draws particular attention to heraldic beasts mounted atop painted wooden poles which featured in the gardens of royalty and the nobility. The ubiquitous painting of *The Family of Henry VIII* with its two views into the garden at Whitehall Palace show these clearly and Robert Langham refers

---

<sup>62</sup> Harrison, *Description of England*, pp. 270-71

to the ‘obelisks, sphearz, and white bearz all of stone upon their curious basez’ at Kenilworth.<sup>63</sup>



**Figure 21** Detail from *The Family of Henry VIII*, c.1545, Unknown artist.  
from Strong, *The Artist and the Garden*, p.17

Such displays of nobility would clearly not have featured in ordinary gardens, but one aspect seen in this painting that does seem to have been more commonly included was the coloured painting of various garden features, as seen for instance in the wooden rails in the painting above. We find, for instance, Thomas Goldying writing once more to Sir Robert Sydney updating him on progress on the work on the house and garden at Penshurst, reporting that the painter ‘hathe sett him selfe on worke [...] in colloring all the dores about the gardens’. He also had to wait for the carpenter to finish making the seats

---

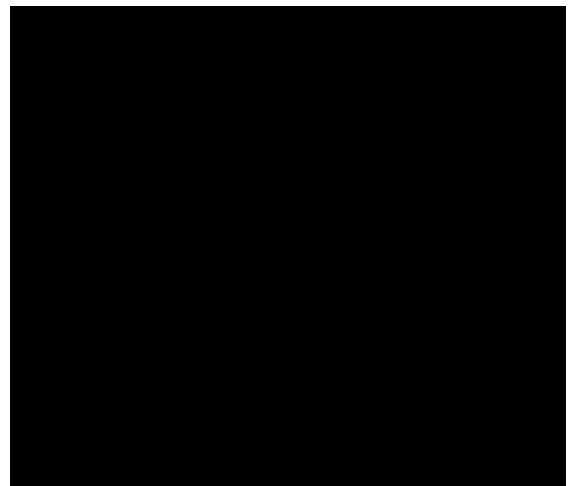
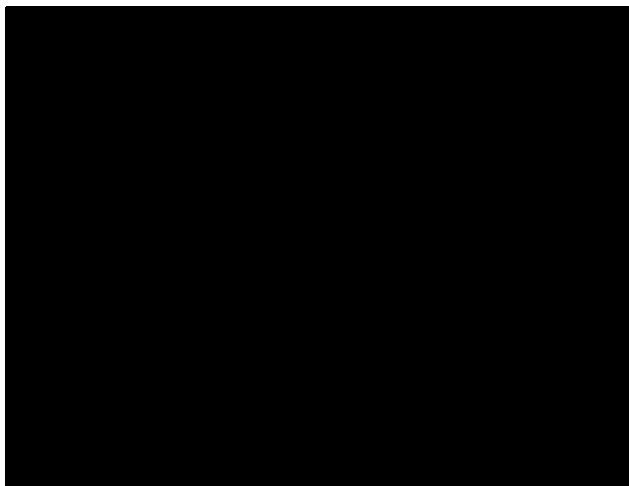
<sup>63</sup> Kuin, *Robert Langham, A Letter*, p. 69

for the end of the walk ‘for he is to cast a cullor uppon them’.<sup>64</sup> As will be discussed in Chapter 3, a painter was employed for six weeks at Trentham Hall in Staffordshire to colour the new fountain.

Other elements that we know were included in gardens from those of the elite to the lesser gentry were water features such as conduits or fountains, rivers, moats and ponds.

Fountains in particular are one feature for which there is a reasonable amount of evidence.

Roy Strong has identified a drawing by Anthonis Wyngaerde of Whitehall Palace from around 1560 depicting a large central fountain in the garden as the first source of evidence for the introduction of the fountain into the English Renaissance garden.<sup>65</sup> The ‘Agas’ map also shows this fountain at Whitehall, as well as an elaborate fountain in the gardens of St Augustine’s Friary by All Hallows under the London Wall.

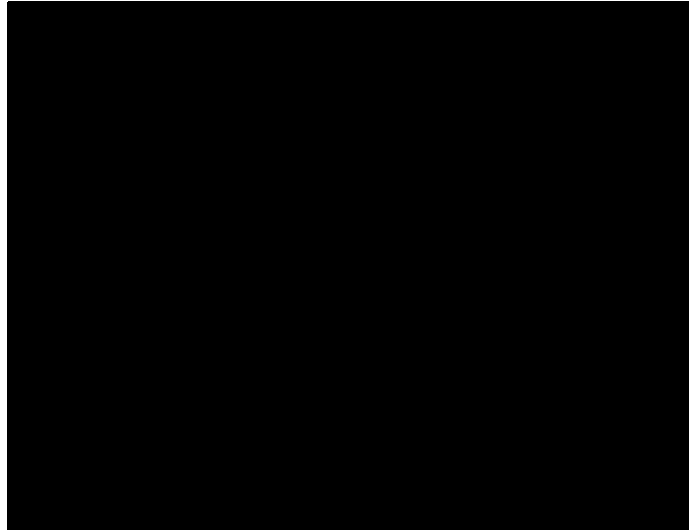


**Figure 22** The fountain at Whitehall as depicted in Anthonis van den Wyngaerde’s *View of Whitehall Palace and the Great Garden*, c.1557-62 and in the ‘Agas’ Map of London, c. 1561  
Strong, *The Artist in the Garden*, p. 19; City of London, Guildhall Library

---

<sup>64</sup> HMC, *De L’Isle MSS*, Vol. III, Thomas Golding to Viscount Lisle, 8 May 1607

<sup>65</sup> Strong, *The Renaissance Garden in England*, p. 35; *The Artist in the Garden*, p. 19



**Figure 23 Detail from the 'Agas' Map of London  
showing the fountain in the gardens of St Augustine's Friary.**  
City of London, Guildhall Library

This fountain is also shown on the Copperplate Map along with another fountain at St Mary's Spital.<sup>66</sup>

Ralph Treswell's survey of Sir Edward Darcy's orchard also shows a fountain at its centre.<sup>67</sup> However, it must be remembered that although such features were undeniably ornamental, their primary purpose was utilitarian – to provide, among other things, a source of running water to irrigate the garden. William Lawson enumerates further advantages: 'moattes, fish ponds, and especially at one side, a River [...] will afford you fish, fence, and moisture to your trees; and pleasure also'.<sup>68</sup> The pleasure seems to be added as very much a secondary concern. Lawson also includes an ornate

---

<sup>66</sup> See **Figure 16**, p. 82 above

<sup>67</sup> See **Figure 18**, p. 88 above

<sup>68</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, p. 13[47]. Whether Lawson is advocating the building of an artificial river or simply taking advantage of a natural one if it happens to run through your land is unclear. However, as it is likely that Lawson's own land ran up to the south bank of the River Tees, the latter suggestion seems more probable: see Harvey, 'William Lawson and his Garden', p. 1340

conduit in the centre of his garden plan, later noting that ‘If there were two or more, it would not be amiss’.<sup>69</sup> He clearly views this as an essential part of any garden.

Another feature of note is seats in gardens, which appear in a variety of forms in a wide range of gardens of the time. Turf seats were a feature of medieval gardens and can be seen in many contemporary paintings and there is evidence that the tradition of the turf seat continued long into the Elizabethan era.<sup>70</sup> Later, there is evidence that elaborate, more permanent garden seats in the Italian Renaissance style were being built and incorporated into the gardens of the elite; the seats built into the garden wall at Edington Priory in Wiltshire, c. 1600, can still be seen.<sup>71</sup> However, there is also evidence that seats were a feature too of lesser gardens. Thomas Hyll describes the growing of climbing plants over wooden frames in order to protect the ‘sitters thereunder’ from the heat and the sun.<sup>72</sup> In another contemporary woodcut, two figures can be seen sitting under an arbour in the corner of the garden:<sup>73</sup>

---

<sup>69</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, pp. 10[44], 55[89]. It is interesting, and perhaps not insignificant, that this ever-practical northern gardener chooses to refer to this as a conduit rather than a fountain, emphasising its functional rather than its ornamental aspects.

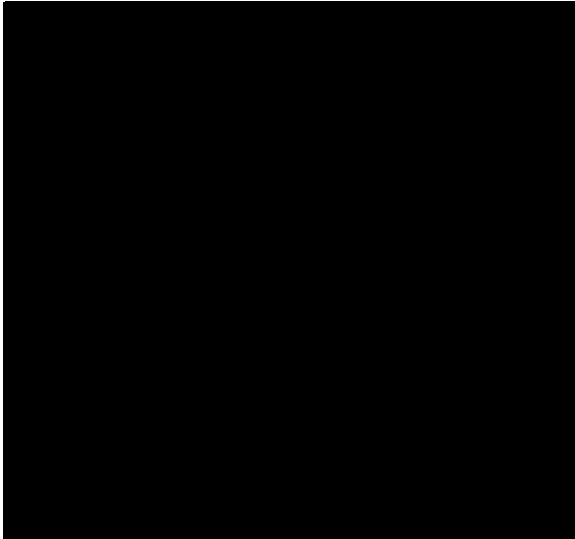
<sup>70</sup> For turf seats in medieval gardens, see for instance **Figure 10**, p. 75 above; in Elizabethan gardens, see Henderson, *Tudor House and Garden*, p. 155 where she quotes the following from *The Queene Majesties Entertainment at Woodstock* (1585), that Elizabeth sat ‘in a fine Bower made of purpose covered with Greene Ivie, and seats made of earthe and sweete smelling hearbes’.

<sup>71</sup> See Henderson, *Tudor House and Garden*, p. 156

<sup>72</sup> Hyll, *Gardeners Labyrinth*, p. 45. **Figure 5**, p. 19 above illustrates such an arbour at the back of the garden.

<sup>73</sup> This illustration is from Salgado Gamini, *The Elizabethan Underworld* (London: Book Club Associates, 1977), p. 60. Gamini states that this is the garden of a London brothel.





**Figure 24 Contemporary woodcut depicting a small garden with an arbour and 'sitters thereunder'.**

William Lawson recommends 'seats and banks of Cammomile' along the walks in his garden and we have already noted that new seats were built and painted for the gardens at Penshurst in Kent. That seats should be a feature of these less grand gardens is perhaps not surprising, because in the larger gardens there were more permanent architectural structures such as banqueting houses and galleries in which garden owners and visitors could sit and view the gardens.<sup>74</sup> Less wealthy owners perhaps substituted these with sheltered seats from which they too could rest and enjoy their gardens.

Finally, attention must be turned to what is ubiquitously considered to be the defining element of Elizabethan gardens, that is the knot garden or maze. According to Roy Strong, the knot was a central feature of all gardens of pleasure in the sixteenth century, but does then admit that we only learn any detail about these gardens in the early years of the seventeenth century once they had started to fall out of fashion in the grand gardens and were beginning instead to appear in lesser gardens, guided by such books as Markham's

---

<sup>74</sup> See Henderson, *Tudor House and Garden* for more on buildings in gardens.

*English Husbandman*.<sup>75</sup> That knots existed throughout the sixteenth century is not in question, the earliest uses of the word in relation to gardens occurring around 1500. The *OED Online* for instance cites the following reference from 1502 ‘For diligence in making knottes in the Duke's garden. Clypping of knottes, and sweeping the said garden’ and in 1531 the accounts for the Bridge House garden in London show payments made to William Tryme and John Davy for ‘ij days cutting of knottes in the garden’.<sup>76</sup> Cardinal Wolsey’s garden at Hampton Court was apparently ‘so enknotted, it cannot be expressed’.<sup>77</sup> However, despite such references, in the absence of any explicit descriptions or visual images, it is very difficult to ascertain what exactly was meant by ‘knot’.<sup>78</sup> In fact, the word does not seem to have applied to anything very specific and Jacques has suggested that early knots may have been little more than the geometric arrangement of beds into compartments discussed earlier and as seen, for instance, in the woodcut illustration in Thomas Hyll’s *Gardeners’ Labyrinth*, in the gardens shown on the Agas map of London, or the simple geometric arrangements depicted in Wyngaerde’s view of the garden at Richmond Palace, c. 1550.<sup>79</sup> As well as these simple knots, one of the compartments appears to contain a maze. Like knots, mazes had long been components of gardens, but unlike knots, their form was much more precise.<sup>80</sup>

---

<sup>75</sup> Strong, *The Renaissance Garden in England*, p. 40

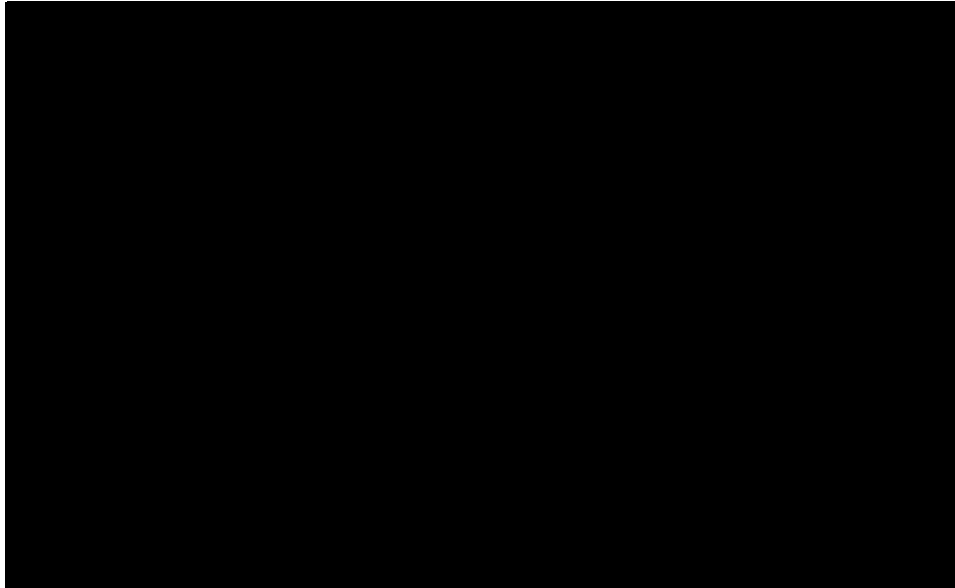
<sup>76</sup> Christianson, *The Riverside Gardens of Thomas More’s London*, p. 167

<sup>77</sup> Cited in Robin Whalley and Anne Jennings, *Knot Gardens and Parterres*, (London: Barn Elms, 1998), p. 32

<sup>78</sup> Christianson, *The Riverside Gardens of Thomas More’s London*, p. 169; Jacques, ‘The Compartment System’, p. 42

<sup>79</sup> Jacques, ‘The Compartment System’, p. 43; See **Figure 5**, p. 19; **Figure 15**, p. 81; **Figure 25**, over

<sup>80</sup> The word ‘maze’ is equivalent to ‘labyrinth’ and it is likely that designs for garden mazes were based on the fashion for labyrinths seen on the floors of French cathedrals: Jacques, ‘The Compartment System’, p. 42



**Figure 25**  
**Anthonis van den Wyngaerde, *View of the Privy Garden at Richmond Palace*, c. 1550**  
from Strong, *The Artist and the Garden*, p. 28

Perhaps all that can be said at this stage then is that although knot gardens were clearly extant in sixteenth-century England, they were not yet anything like as complex as those illustrated for instance in the French gardens recorded by du Cerceau and they were yet to be adopted as the norm in all but the grandest of gardens. What Elizabethan knot gardens actually looked like remains unproven and, as suggested by Strong, it may well have been the early years of the following century before the ubiquity of the knot garden was being practically adopted in the generality of gardens. A fuller discussion will therefore be left until the following chapter, while a reassessment of some of the evidence for knot gardens in early modern England is presented in Appendix 3.

As a conclusion to this chapter then: what did the ordinary Elizabethan gentleman's garden look like? It has been established that the productive elements of the garden were of utmost importance and were probably the major feature of most gardens right across

the social strata; ornamental flowers appeared to be of relatively little importance. Where resources allowed for more than the most basic of gardens, considerations of the form of the garden were evident in the geometric layout, whether of raised vegetable beds, orchards or ornamental compartments. It has been shown how Italian and French Renaissance elements were beginning to be introduced into elite gardens and how the introduction of new plants and flowers from abroad heralded a new era of experimentation with exotic fruit growing. Perhaps most significant was that this was the beginning of a time of change. Medieval gardens had remained much the same for centuries, but the Elizabethan era saw the introduction of new ideas and practices, evidenced in many areas of life, but also in its gardens. As William Harrison noted with approval, within forty years past, gardens ‘were never furnished with so good fruit nor with such variety as at present’; their beauty was wonderfully increased with flowers, curious and costly workmanship and new plants from abroad; and the gardeners were ‘so curious and cunning ... now in these days that they presume to do in manner what they list with Nature’.<sup>81</sup>

---

<sup>81</sup> Harrison, *Description of England*, pp. 269, 265



## CHAPTER THREE

### SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY GARDENS: WIDENING HORIZONS

It was demonstrated in the last chapter that, from the limited evidence available, it is possible to piece together a picture of what an Elizabethan garden may have looked like and to identify this as a period when fresh influences and new ideas were beginning to reach the gardeners of early modern England. As we move into the opening decades of the seventeenth century, it now needs to be considered how, and indeed if, these ideas were developed and manifested in gardens across the land.

Whilst being ever mindful of the pitfalls in making arbitrary chronological divisions to describe the history of gardening, it is inevitable that as the long reign of Elizabeth came to a close, the new century and the reign of a new monarch would bring with it new aspirations and possibilities for the future. Horizons were being widened by the continued spread of and accessibility to printed material, increased opportunities for foreign travel and the availability of new luxury goods as London thrived and developed as a centre of global trade. Rare and exotic plants were arriving on English shores from all over the world. In 1597 John Gerard describes many plants in his *Herball* that he has obtained from ‘forren places’ including ginger from the Barbary or from ‘Domingo in the Indies’; tulips, that ‘strang and forraine flower’, from the Middle East; crocuses from Spain and Italy and of course, potatoes and tobacco from the Americas.<sup>1</sup> Three decades later, in 1629, John Parkinson says of Gerard that ‘since his dates we have had many more varieties, then he [...] ever heard of, as may be perceived by the store I have here produced’.<sup>2</sup> Already, the

---

<sup>1</sup> Gerard, *Herball*, sig. A1<sup>v</sup>; pp. 55, 116, 123, 285, 780

<sup>2</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, Epistle to the Reader

choice of plants available to the gardener or garden owner was far greater than it had been at the end of the previous century. Plant collectors were commissioned to travel abroad to search out ‘curious’ and ‘outlandish’ plants to stock the gardens of the nobility, but at the same time, as will be discussed in Chapter 4, a lively nursery trade was developing in England and across the continent which allowed these plants to be propagated, sold, exchanged and cultivated by avid plantsmen and gentleman gardeners across the land. The ornamental garden was developing as a place in which rare and costly plants could be displayed, the gardens themselves becoming showpieces of wealth, status and fashion.

However, it was not just about plants and flowers. There is increasing evidence that some of the ornamental and landscaping features characteristic of Italian and French Renaissance styles, as seen for instance in the extravagant show-piece gardens created for the new Queen, Anne of Denmark at Somerset House and Greenwich Palace at the beginning of the century, were in some cases and to varying degrees, being incorporated into the gardens of the rural gentry.<sup>3</sup> As will be discussed, the new gardens laid out for Sir Richard Leveson at Trentham Hall in the 1630s and at the Evelyn family home at Wotton in the 1640s are particularly revealing in this regard.

Alongside these tangible factors however, and as was discussed in Chapter 1, there were other agents of change at work which need to be considered. These included, for instance, an acceptance of the emerging concept of science and experiment which slowly displaced

---

<sup>3</sup> These gardens, along with other notable elite gardens of the time, such as the Cecil’s gardens at Hatfield House and William Herbert, the Earl of Pembroke’s gardens at Wilton House, were heavily influenced by the work of Salomon de Caus, a French Huguenot engineer who had also spent time Italy and later, his younger brother Isaac de Caus. For more on these gardens and the work of the De Caus brothers, see Strong, *The Renaissance Garden in England*, esp. pp. 10, 87-93 and Henderson, *Tudor House and Garden*, esp. pp. 99-103, 112-13.

both the unchallenged wisdom of ancient authorities, as well as the magic, witchcraft and ‘idle fables’ as John Parkinson dismissed them, popularly employed to explain the inexplicable in everyday life. Ideas and attitudes towards notions such as the commonwealth, the public good, civility, individual prosperity and social mobility were also shifting, as were moral attitudes towards such previously frowned upon notions as leisure, pleasure and luxury. Not only is it possible, as has been shown, to trace these changes through contemporary gardening literature, they can also be identified in the gardening practices of the period.

However, as ever, the reality is none so simple. Whilst changes were clearly afoot, it would seem that in many cases the gardens of the rural gentry did not necessarily appear to be significantly different from those of the previous century. Gardeners and garden owners were still influenced by the same practical considerations as their predecessors: local conditions, climate, topography, existing garden layout, cost, the balance between utilitarian and ornamental aspects were all as relevant as they had ever been, just as were the more subjective considerations of individual tastes and preferences. New ideas, from wherever they may have come and due to a host of variable factors, took time to disseminate, and even then were taken up, if at all, with varying degrees of enthusiasm by their recipients. This resulted in a miscellany of ideas and actual practices on the ground and, as already stated, the dangers of over-simplification must be constantly borne in mind. Nevertheless, it is an investigation into the apparent shift in emphasis from the utilitarian, productive garden to the ornamental pleasure garden, particularly as evidenced in the gardens of the rural gentry, that will form the focus of this chapter. The first section will begin by reflecting on the continuities in and development of existing gardening practices



from the Elizabethan into the Jacobean era, before moving on in the second section to examine the changes brought about by the new century as evidenced in early seventeenth-century gardens. The final section of the chapter will consider how far, by the eve of the Restoration, these changes were consolidated and established in the gardens of early modern England.

One significant factor which aids the study of this later period is that evidence becomes a little less elusive. Contemporary gardening literature continued to be produced, including the landmark publication of John Parkinson's *Paradisi in Sole* in 1629, a book constantly referred to throughout this thesis, but which it could be argued tells us as much about early seventeenth-century gardening as any other single source; more family portraits appear with glimpses of gardens in the background; extant garden plans appear such as the one of Sayes Court and, probably most importantly, the preservation of gentry manuscript collections from around the country allows the close examination of household accounts, memoranda and correspondence which, although incomplete, offer unique insight into what was actually being carried out in gardens across the land. Although lack of similar evidence from the sixteenth century means that it is not always possible to make meaningful comparisons and to identify what, if anything, was new, what this evidence does do is to widen our picture of the ordinary gentry garden of the early seventeenth century, providing fragmentary facets to be added to what we think we may already know. The nature of the evidence allows us to move significantly beyond simply what the garden may have looked like, important as that is, to gain some limited understanding of the changing attitudes and priorities that influenced the practices of seventeenth-century gardeners and garden owners and helped them to shape their gardens.



Figure 26 Title Page from John Parkinson's *Paradisi in Sole, Paradisus Terrestris*

### 3.1 ‘All being the experience of forty eight years labour’: Continuities in gardening practice

The consideration of Elizabethan gardens in the last chapter began with an extensive discussion of the layout of an early modern garden based on contemporary literature, maps and a handful of paintings and drawings, concluding that the ‘four square form’ was generally accepted as being the ideal layout for a garden and there is little evidence to suggest that this basic geometric layout altered significantly during the first half of the seventeenth century. Paula Henderson notes that ‘Architecture and art changed only gradually in the early years of the new reign and the same is likely to have been true of gardens’; Roy Strong observes that the garden style recorded in Jacobean and Caroline painting ‘is firmly late Elizabethan’ and Tom Williamson describes a general gardening style up until the Civil War that draws no distinction between Tudor and early Stuart gentry gardens, portraying them as ‘comparatively small spaces which were clearly separated from the surrounding world by high hedges, fences or walls. Their design was dominated by geometry’.<sup>4</sup> It was noted in the last chapter that contemporary authors of early seventeenth-century gardening literature – notably Gervase Markham and William Lawson – had lived and worked during the latter decades of the previous century and that their views were likely therefore to reflect late Elizabethan practice. Having said that, as both these authors published their books some fifteen years into the new reign, if major changes had occurred during this time, it seems likely that they would have reflected those changes. That they did not reinforces the point that basic garden layout remained little altered.

---

<sup>4</sup> Henderson, *Tudor House and Garden*, p. 99; Strong, *The Artist and the Garden*, pg. 35; Tom Williamson, *Polite Landscapes: Gardens and Society in Eighteenth Century England* (Stroud: Sutton, 1995), p. 19

In the main, it appears that gardens were still being laid out following late sixteenth-century ideals as described, for instance, in Lawson's garden plan illustrated in his *New Orchard and Garden* which shows a simple geometric arrangement of square plots, divided by alleys and bounded by fences and wooded walks.<sup>5</sup> Of the six sections he depicts, three of them are to be set with [fruit] trees, two of them are given over to the kitchen garden and one contains garden knots. Whilst Lawson concedes that this ideal will not be within every man's means – 'the better sort may use better formes, and more costly worke' – it nevertheless reinforces the idea of the geometric layout which was well-established in the Elizabethan era, and the uses of the various compartments conform to the accepted notions of orchard and garden. What is significant is that the utilitarian aspects continue to be of paramount importance, with five of the six compartments given over to productive use and just one sixth of the garden - the garden knots - being purely ornamental.

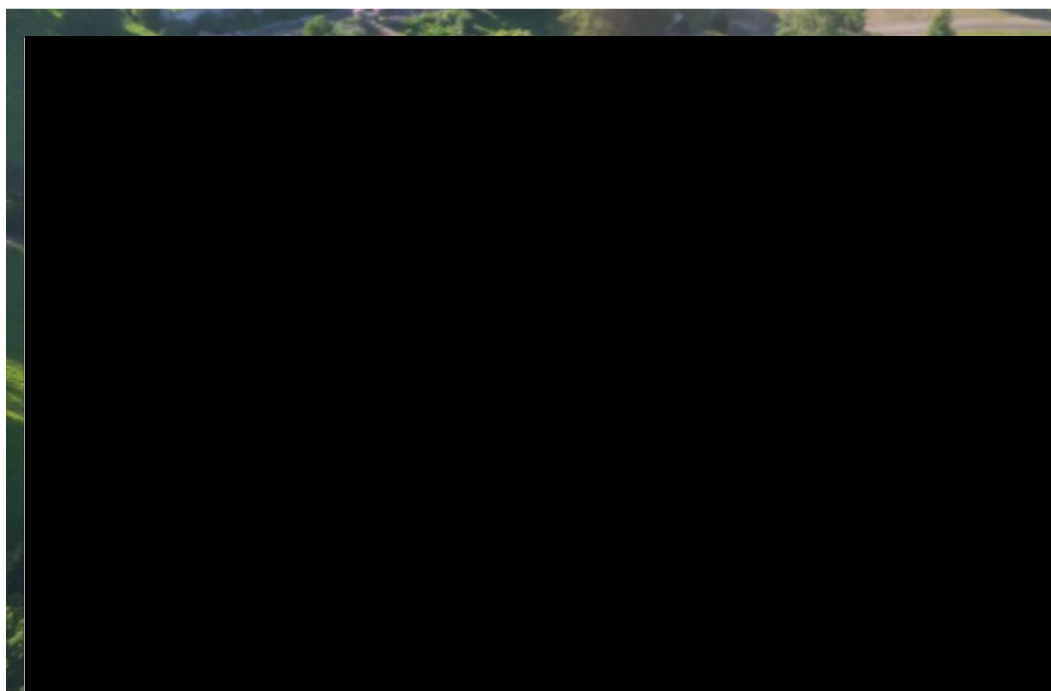
Examination of seventeenth-century sources confirm gardens still being laid out along these lines. According to his memorandum books, Sir John Oglander's garden at Nunwell on the Isle of Wight contained two orchards, an upper garden containing more fruit trees, a court with vines and apricots, a bowling green with more vines and raspberries and a hop garden. The household accounts indicate the presence of a kitchen garden, with payments for cabbage plants and other seeds.<sup>6</sup> Whether the bowling green was also used for its intended purpose is unclear, but the various elements of the garden are weighted in favour of the utilitarian aspects and in fact, most were already in place when Sir John inherited the family estate at Nunwell at the age of twenty three following the death of his father Sir

---

<sup>5</sup> See **Figure 8**, p. 71 above

<sup>6</sup> IOWRO, OG/AA/29, fol. 27<sup>v</sup>; OG/AA/27, fols 31, 47

William Oglander in 1609. At this time, it consisted of ‘the Howse on Eastnunwell, together with Bruhowse, Barne, Stables, Warren, gardens, Orchardes, Hoppegardens, Boowlingegreene, and all other thinges thereunto adjacent’. He embarked on a programme of rebuilding ‘for by reason of his fathers Sir William Oglanders absence owte of the Illande all the Ancient howsinges weare rotten’.<sup>7</sup> The basic Jacobean house built by John Oglander still stands today, facing east and situated at the foot of a hill which slopes upwards to the south. The brick façade and frontage were added at the end of the eighteenth century and until very recently Nunwell House remained the family home of the Oglanders.



**Figure 27 Nunwell House as it is today, with the ground sloping steeply up to the south and the ornamental garden laid out on the level ground in front of the house**  
Photograph by author

---

<sup>7</sup> IOWRO, OG/AA/14 ‘How Eastnunwell Came to the Oglanders 1619’

By far the most detailed description of the garden, of which there is now little trace, occurs in the fourth commonplace book, covering the period from December 1631 to December 1633. Sir John writes:

I have with my owne handes planted 2 younge Orchardes at Nunwell, the lower with Pippin, Pearmaynes, Puttes, [?Harnyes] and other good aples, and all sortes of good pears [,] in the other Cherryes, Damsons and Plumes, in the upor garden Apricookes, Melecatouns and figges. An[d] in the Parlour garden, in one knott all sortes of Gilliflowers in the other knott all sortes of ffrench fflowes, and Tulippes of all sortes[.] Some rootes cost me 10s a Roote. An[d] in the Courte, Vines and Apricookes, in the Bowling Greene the vine and frame with infinito of Raspases, Insomutch as of a rude Chaos I have now made it a ffitt place for any Gentleman and had hopes that my sonn George would have succeded me and have Injoyed the fruites of my Labours.<sup>8</sup>

This description contains much that is worthy of note, and Sir John begins by mentioning two orchards that he has recently planted, one with varieties of apples and pears, the other with cherry, damson and plum trees. In the upper garden, he has planted apricots, melecatouns [melocoton]<sup>9</sup> and figs. As discussed in the last chapter, the planting and maintaining of orchards was common practice in the sixteenth century and so it continued into the seventeenth, contributing to both the productive and the ornamental aspects of the garden. Although not all of the fruit trees planted in Sir John's two orchards can, strictly speaking, be called native species, they had all been cultivated for so long that they might as well be and their inclusion in this part of the garden is neither surprising nor unusual. On the other hand, the cultivation of more exotic fruits not naturally suited to the English climate such as the apricots, melocotons and figs he goes on to mention, required an element of expense and effort indicative to a degree of the prosperity of the owner. As discussed previously, elaborate methods of cultivating such fruits had been experimented with since Elizabethan times and developments of those methods will be discussed later.

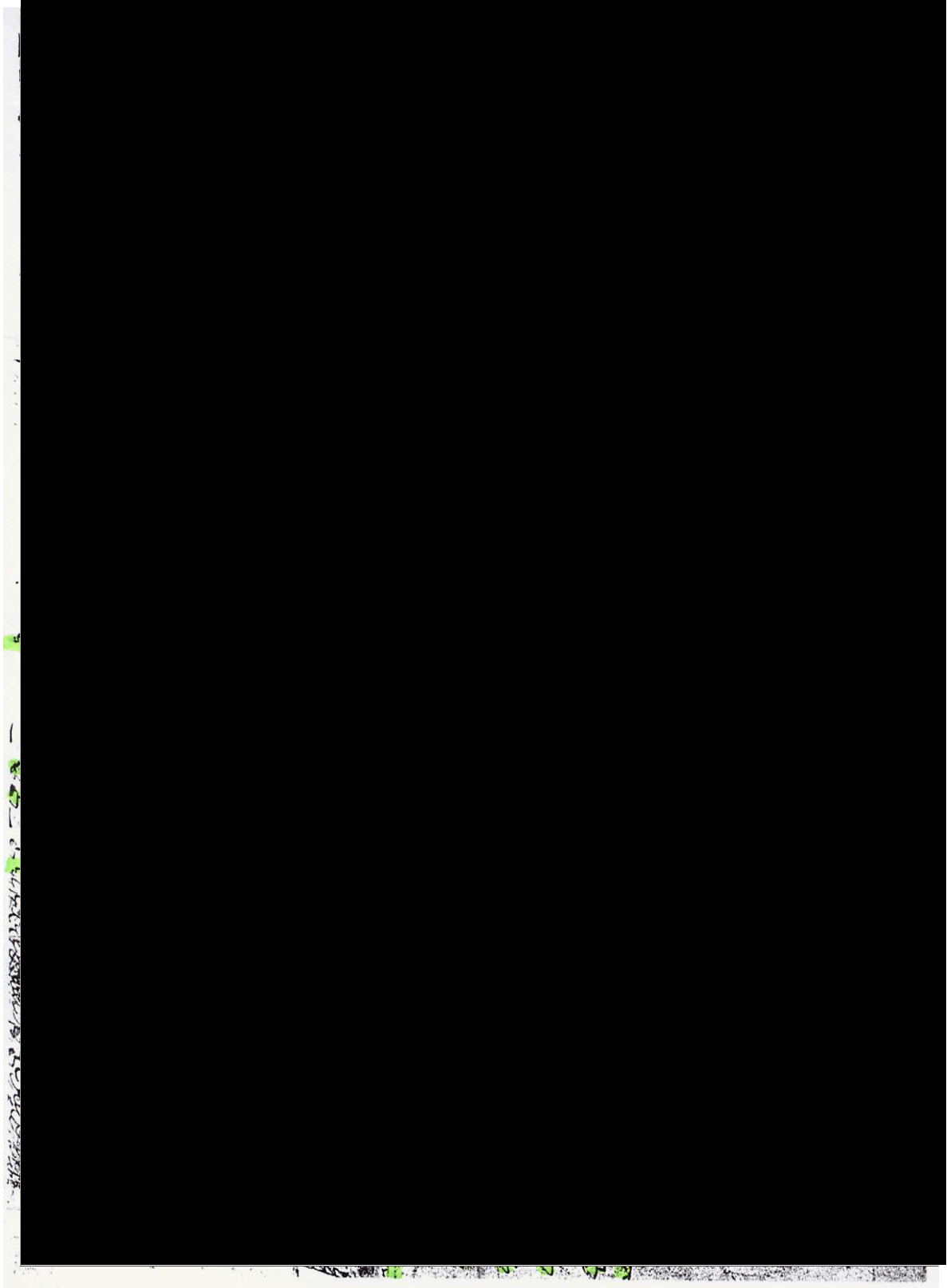
---

<sup>8</sup> IOWRO, OG/AA/29, fol. 27<sup>v</sup>

<sup>9</sup> A variety of late-ripening peach: *OED Online*

Suffice to say here that in the Nunwell garden, which by virtue of its location on the Isle of Wight would have enjoyed one of the most favourable climates in the country, the tender fruit trees referred to here would probably have only required the benefit of being grown and trained against a south-facing wall in order to be productive.

There is an extant map of Nunwell dated 1748 which, whilst changes will inevitably have been made in the intervening century, does appear to show the basic layout of Sir John's garden as he describes it (see **Figure 28** over). On this map, a clearly-annotated wall is marked running directly east-west, with the south side facing over what is likely to be – by virtue of its physical location on the upward slopes of the hill - the 'upper garden', just where Sir John describes the growing of his apricots, melocotons and figs. Beyond this lies one of the two orchards mentioned by Sir John. Again it is actually marked as such, although on this section of the map only the southernmost part of the orchard is seen – it actually extends up the hill and to the south, covering an area at least three times as large as the second, smaller orchard shown lying beyond the ornamental garden to the east. The map section also indicates that 'the Courte' to which he refers was adjoining the south side of the house, so this would have provided another suitable location – enclosed, and with a south-facing wall - for the growing of apricots and vines, again, just as Sir John mentions in his description. Unfortunately, the bowling green given over to the growing of raspberries is not shown, although it is possible to speculate that it might have occupied the large open space immediately to the east of the house. Less specifically, this map also illustrates the garden made up of the conventional geometric arrangement of square and rectangular beds, divided by walks, alleys, walls and hedges.



**Figure 28** Detail from a map of Nunwell, showing the area closest to the house, 1748.  
Map kindly supplied by Vicky Basford, Archaeological Centre, Isle of Wight. Annotations added by the author.



Sir John's description tells us, as we have come to expect, that most of these divisions were given over to productive use. However, the map also clearly indicates the presence of an ornamental garden, north of the dividing wall and in front of the house, on its eastern face and it is reasonable to assume that this was the location of Sir John's parlour garden. It is marked as containing both a parterre and a terrace, ornamental features which by the time the map was drawn in the eighteenth century are highly likely to have replaced the seventeenth-century knots described by Sir John. The details of this parlour garden will be discussed later in this chapter, suffice to note here that it appears to be the only purely ornamental area of the garden.

Despite the prescriptive advice offered on the ideal layout of a garden by authors such as Lawson and Parkinson, they recognise that many must however 'bee content with such as the place will afford them'.<sup>10</sup> In practice, very few gardens begin as a flat canvas and very few people could afford the extensive and expensive earthworks required to make them so, and the positioning of the various elements of the garden therefore had to be adapted to suit the local terrain. The gardens at Nunwell are an excellent case in point. As already noted, the house is set at the base of a ridge with much of the land to the south of the house stretching up the hill, so whilst this was suitable for the planting of orchards and trees, as shown on the map and as can still be seen at the house today, the formal gardens were all laid out in the relatively flat land to the east of the house. It would seem that the basic layout of Sir John's gardens were dictated more by practical considerations than aesthetics. Similarly, away in Yorkshire at the same time, the garden notes of Sir John Reresby

---

<sup>10</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 1

describe an ‘irregular, slightly organic arrangement’ of walled gardens and forecourts, suggesting a layout suited ‘for convenience [...] rather than for aesthetics’.<sup>11</sup>

Although there is nothing so helpful as a plan or map to guide us, the correspondence and memoranda of Sir Thomas Temple also reveal a little about the layout of his garden at Burton Dassett in Warwickshire. As is the case with Sir John Oglander, it is clear that much of the garden is given over to orchards, areas for vegetable growing and to hops, but again, there is a small ornamental garden which Sir Thomas variously refers to as his ‘Parlour gardine’, ‘that smale gardine which will yeild to me some sweette ffloweers’, ‘my l[itt]le gardine at Dassett paled’, ‘the paled Gardine [...] before the Parlour wyndow’.<sup>12</sup> In his written instructions to Richard the Gardiner, who is to be employed to build this new garden, dated 1st February 1631, Sir Thomas gives a great deal of information about how he wishes it to be laid out.<sup>13</sup> The detail here is reiterated in another letter to his steward Harry Rose ‘whereby eyther of us may have knowledge and remembrance of what I [...d] in my Gardine’, as well as by notes of his plans made in his memorandum book earlier the previous year.<sup>14</sup> These documents tell us that the parlour garden is to be enclosed, first with an upright hedge and then ‘paled’ with a wooden fence, although the wall of the house and some other buildings - ‘Rose his chamber’, the ‘milke-house’ and the ‘Southe walles’ are mentioned – also appear to form part of the enclosure.<sup>15</sup> In November 1631, Rose is instructed to get some good labourer to cut down the elm tree to provide timbers ‘to finishe the dore first & pales of the Parlour gardine’. This work is to be done

---

<sup>11</sup> Woudstra and O’Halloran, ‘Sir John Reresby’s Garden Notebook’, p. 139

<sup>12</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2279, STT2347, STT2287

<sup>13</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2347

<sup>14</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2288; ST38, fol. 19

<sup>15</sup> HL, Temple MSS, ST38, fol. 19; also STT2288, STT2347

before the gardener, Richard, arrives.<sup>16</sup> His time is clearly limited and Sir Thomas apparently intends to use his expertise to set out and plant the garden. He instructs that the garden should be divided into three parts and the first part, next to the pales ‘I would have made in a bed, wherein a single table I would have damaske roses plantt, in the second table of red roses, in the third table clove gillyflowers in the fourth table violetes in the fifth table primeroses’. The next third of the ground is to be made into an ‘Alley for passage’ and the last third is to be ‘plantt as before’ – presumably in the same way as the first bed he describes. Vines and a variety of other fruit trees are to be planted along the various walls. Other features he mentions are the ‘paled gardine dore’ and ‘the Quarter next to the window’.<sup>17</sup> From these albeit scanty details, it is possible to speculate at least on what this garden may have looked like: five tables<sup>18</sup> for planting are arranged symmetrically in two areas of the garden, referred to at least once as quarters, separated by an alley, enclosed within a hotchpotch of walls, hedges and pales (see **Figure 29** over). We have no idea of the size of this garden, although Sir Thomas does refer to it as ‘smal[l]’ and ‘l[itt]le’; there is no clue to the location of the garden door or the arrangement of buildings around the perimeters of the garden and obviously the five tables could have been laid out in any number of ways within the quarters. Also, as has been discussed above, the form of this garden is clearly limited by existing features – it has to be accommodated between the house and the wall to the south, so there is apparently only room for two quarters, rather than the ideal ‘four square form’ described in gardening literature.<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2279

<sup>17</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2347

<sup>18</sup> Defined in the *Oxford English Dictionary* as ‘a plot of ground for planting’

<sup>19</sup> A ‘quarter’ simply meant a square and did not necessarily imply a specific number – although as four quarters made a larger square, this was seen as the ideal, as Markham was at pains to explain. Lawson’s ideal garden, it should be noted, contained six quarters.



**Figure 29**  
**Author's conjectural view of Sir Thomas Temple's Parlour Garden, drawn from his own instructions**

This provides another, slightly different example of garden designs being adapted to suit local conditions.

However, what now becomes apparent is the remarkable similarity between this garden layout and that depicted, for instance, in the maps of London showing the compartmented gardens at Ely Place and St Mary's Spittel dating from the mid-sixteenth century or those used to illustrate Thomas Hill's *Profitable Art of Gardening* from the same period.<sup>20</sup> Also, the plants Sir Thomas chooses to grow in his new garden could have been found in any Elizabethan or even medieval flower garden – there is no sign here of any of the exotic new varieties being imported into England by this time, no sign even of tulips which had

---

<sup>20</sup> See **Figure 15**, p. 79; **Figure 16**, p. 80 and **Figure 5**, p. 19 above.

been a popular addition to fashionable English gardens for nigh on thirty years. This is in fact a fine illustration of the point that although changes were undeniably taking place in the opening decades of the seventeenth century, they were not necessarily being taken up by all and sundry in the gardens of rural England. The 'paled Gardine' planned by Sir Thomas Temple and laid out by Richard the Gardiner in 1631 had its roots planted firmly in the previous century.

Having established that it is possible to trace elements of continuity in garden layout from the mid-sixteenth century into the seventeenth century, the way is now perhaps open to investigate further how other Elizabethan gardening practices discussed in the last chapter were continued and developed by seventeenth-century gardeners. The same questions can be asked – what were the uses of gardens? What was being grown or displayed in them? How were practices such as the growing of exotic fruit being developed? Who was carrying out work in gardens, what exactly were they doing and how were they doing it? Some answers can be provided by further examination of gentry manuscript collections, and in particular, household accounts from across the country. Although most do not provide the kind of detail found in the Oglander papers or the Temple manuscripts, when taken together, this fragmentary evidence does help to form a wider and more coherent picture of what was happening in the ordinary gentry gardens of seventeenth-century England.

At the same time as offering insight into who was working in these gardens, study of these accounts also reveals details of the kind of work that was being done. Although a reasonable amount of information can be gleaned from examining a cross-section of

various household account books, particularly enlightening in this regard are the household accounts of Sir Thomas Pelham of Halland House in Sussex (1633-49), Sir Peter Temple's Account Book 1625-6 of Stow in Buckinghamshire, and the correspondence already mentioned between his father, Sir Thomas Temple and the gardener at Burton Dassett in Warwickshire. Whilst the available evidence cannot hope to offer anything approaching a complete picture, it is possible to discern a difference between the work of 'the gardiner' and the work of the various labourers employed 'in the garden'. The work of weeding women, for instance, appears in almost every case. These were often the wives of other labourers employed on the estate: at Halland House for instance, Goodwife Rolfe, who becomes Widow Rolfe, still continues to be paid for weeding even after her husband has died. Goodwife Upfold and Goodwife Starre are paid 2*d*/day for seventeen weeks weeding in 1638, although by 1641, the rate appears to have been increased to 3*d*/day when two women were paid £2 14*s* 9*d* between them for '109 dayes and a halfe weeding'.<sup>21</sup> However, at the same time, 'five poore women' are each paid 6*d*/day for weeding at Gorhambury, whilst at the Llantrithyd estate of Sir Thomas Aubrey in South Wales, £3 is agreed for weeders from May to November, but we don't know how many workers or for how many days a week they were employed.<sup>22</sup> Examples such as this illustrate well the problems with this kind of evidence in that as there was no consistency in the way such records were kept, it is not easy to make direct comparisons or draw general conclusions. However, it seems safe to assume that weeding was a regular task undertaken by women. Other such tasks include gathering herbs and flowers for the still-house, planting and

---

<sup>21</sup> BL, Pelham, Add. 33147, fols 37, 43; fols 61<sup>v</sup>, 89

<sup>22</sup> Lionel Munby, ed., *Early Stuart Household Accounts* (Cambridge: Hertfordshire Record Society, 1986), p. 160; Lloyd Bowen, ed., *Family and Society in early Stuart Glamorgan: The Household Accounts of Sir Thomas Aubrey of Llantrithyd, c.1565-1641* (Cardiff: South Wales Record Society, 2006), p. 74

setting violets and in one case, planting beans at Leyhill in Devon.<sup>23</sup> The heavier, menial, outdoor work – such as mowing, hedging and ditching – was done by male labourers who were paid by the day. At Gorhambury, Goodman Mason receives 10d/day for ‘digging and hedging [the] kitchen garden’; at Trentham Hall Hugh Lovatt is paid ‘for 5 dayes labour at 8d per day filling the Cort with soyle; at Stow in Buckinghamshire, Michael Kempall is paid 4s for 4 days ‘gravelling the passage in the South Court levelling it & picking out the greate stones etc.’ while Robert Clark the elder, John Shyrley, John Hostler and Robert Clark are each paid 6d for ‘digginge up the foundations of the orchard wall’.<sup>24</sup> As William Lawson points out, the ground can be ‘digged by some unskillfull servant: for the Gardner cannot doe all himself’.<sup>25</sup>

Sometimes labourers were paid on a piece-work basis: at Trentham Hall in Staffordshire, Richard Moare is paid 2s 8d per perch for ‘the making of the south ends of the garden wall’ whilst Timothy Addams receives 8d per foot for ‘hewing 213 foote of Rayle for the Court’. The ubiquitous mole catchers were paid by the dozen!<sup>26</sup> On other occasions they were paid a fixed rate for a particular job – by ‘the greate’. This appears to be an arrangement more favourable to the employer rather than the labourer: Thomas Temple often urges his steward to find some good labourer who he can pay ‘by the greate’, for instance to cut down an elm tree, but if that is not possible, then by the day.<sup>27</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup> BL, Pelham, Add. 33147; Todd Gray, ed., *Devon Household Accounts, 1627-59, Part 1* (Exeter: Devon and Cornwall Record Society, 1995), p. 124

<sup>24</sup> Munby, *Early Stuart Household Accounts*, p. 166; SRO, D593/R/1/2; HL, Temple MSS, ST452, pp. 75, 84

<sup>25</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, p. 4

<sup>26</sup> SRO, D593/R/1/2; BL, Pelham, Add. 33147, fol. 6<sup>v</sup>

<sup>27</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2279, STT2297

However, in most cases, the more skilled work in the garden was left, not surprisingly, to the gardener. Sometimes he is clearly a member of the household, paid a regular salary as in the case, for instance, of Cadwallider Morgan, gardener at the Cecil household at Quickswood in Hertfordshire who in 1634 was paid £3 a quarter or Thomas Tudor, ‘Master Gardener’ at Hatfield House at the same time, who was paid £9 a quarter, although he did have to pay for his two men out of this as well.<sup>28</sup> More often however, and no doubt due to the seasonal nature of gardening work, gardeners were employed on a daily rate. At Halland House for instance, in addition to many days of unspecified work in the garden, ‘Grove the gardner’ was paid 1s/day for such specific tasks such as ‘pruning and dressing of the trees in the garden’.<sup>29</sup> Another well-documented example is that of Henry Broughton, gardener to Sir Peter Temple at Stow. Although he was employed on and off throughout most of the year, he was paid at a daily rate of 6d/day. This particular set of accounts gives a particularly good insight into the kind of work that the gardener was employed to do.<sup>30</sup> The areas in which Broughton worked include the old kitchen garden, the new kitchen garden, the vineyard, the orchard, the South Court and the parlour garden, as well as around the [fish] pools. He made borders and quarters for the setting of vegetables, herbs, flowers and trees. He planted artichokes, cabbages and peas in the kitchen garden, he set trees in the orchard and sowed grass seed in the South Court. He pruned and nailed up the vines in the vineyard and clipped the hedges, knots and arbours as well as the bushes ‘in the old kitchen court to hang clothes on’. He tended the fruit trees and the roses, took up and re-set the maze in the parlour garden and graveled the walks.

---

<sup>28</sup> Munby, *Early Stuart Household Accounts*, pp. 63, 65. Once again, the household accounts do not provide a complete record, but it would appear that Thomas Tudor was one of the most highly paid members of the household at this time. The vast gardens at Hatfield House were of course renowned throughout the country, so perhaps we would expect the gardener here to be exceptionally highly skilled and therefore suitably recompensed: Munby, pp. xix, 63-68.

<sup>29</sup> BL, Pelham, Add. 33147, fol. 10

<sup>30</sup> HL, Temple MSS, ST452



His not so glamorous tasks include the carrying and spreading of muck and weeding.<sup>31</sup> In the main however, these were tasks that required the knowledge of a skilful gardener to carry them out successfully,<sup>32</sup> although most were still concerned with the utilitarian rather than the ornamental aspects of the garden.

The evidence presented in the Temple correspondence offers further insight into the various tasks carried out in the garden and the work of the gardener. After he had moved with his wife to live at the home of his daughter and son-in-law, Margaret and Sir Edward Longeville at Wolverton, Sir Thomas corresponded frequently with his estate manager, Harry Rose, who was responsible for maintaining the house and land at Burton Dassett in his absence. Of particular interest here are the letters of Sir Thomas to Rose regarding the hiring of labourers to start working on his new parlour garden at Dassett, discussed in detail above, and in particular, the hiring of Richard ‘Gardynner to my Grandson in law Mr Francis Norrice’.<sup>33</sup> First, as already noted, Rose was instructed to get some good labourer to cut down the elm tree to provide timber for the pales of the new garden. Then he was to hire ‘labourers of the better sorte’ to help the gardener by carrying out the initial preparation of the ground – if they could provide their own spades, all the better! It appears then that Norrice was prepared to make his gardener available to Sir Thomas for a short while: ‘longe I have hearde the said Gardiner cannot stay at Dassett’ wrote Sir Thomas.<sup>34</sup> It was agreed that Richard would come for six days now (in February) and on two further occasions during the year. Because his time was limited, Sir Thomas was anxious to employ his skills specifically for the making of the parlour garden, with its flower beds,

---

<sup>31</sup> This is one example of a garden where weeding women do not seem to be employed.

<sup>32</sup> Thomas Hanmer observes for instance that ‘The pruning of vines well is of greatest difficulty [...] there needs an experienced pruner to doe it’: *Garden Book*, p. 159

<sup>33</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2347

<sup>34</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2279, STT2284, STT2296

fruit trees and vines.<sup>35</sup> This delineation of roles is interesting: a labourer was hired to cut down a tree, better labourers were required for digging the ground for the garden, only then did the gardener arrive to design the layout and carry out the planting.

There are several other references to Richard the gardener in the correspondence and it is clear that Sir Thomas acknowledges his expertise and values his advice. Regarding the planting up of a newly dug area, he advises Rose to ask ‘what Richard the Gardiner of Weston should thinke fit’.<sup>36</sup> Elsewhere, he reported to Rose that he is ‘advised to plant french Beanes & flax by Richarde my sonn Norrice his Gardiner’, as this would be a more efficient way to prepare the ground for a new orchard than digging and weeding.<sup>37</sup> He also offers his opinion on the best way to take vine cuttings and his advice is repeated in minute detail by Sir Thomas in a subsequent letter to Rose.<sup>38</sup> It is also interesting to note that the gardener is clearly literate. He not only receives written instructions from Sir Thomas, but at a later date it appears that Richard has himself written to Sir Thomas, to advise him that he can no longer supply apricot trees as promised, because they are dead.<sup>39</sup> (This may in fact represent his fall from favour as Sir Thomas’ next and last mention of Richard is to complain about him to Rose for planting the honeysuckles in the wrong place!)<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>35</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2347

<sup>36</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2285

<sup>37</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2286. It is now a well known fact that the planting of legumes such as peas and beans actually improves soil by ‘fixing’ nitrogen, an important plant nutrient, in the soil: it would seem that this fact had been noted by early gardeners (and farmers) through observation and experience.

<sup>38</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2287

<sup>39</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2296. This is not the place for an extended discussion of literacy in early modern England, but Tessa Watts has observed that whilst it is likely that most children, including those of husbandmen and labourers, will have attended petty school until the age of six, long enough to master the basics of reading, writing was not taught until later: Watts, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety*, p. 7. That Richard the Gardiner was able to read is therefore not surprising, the fact that he could write perhaps is.

<sup>40</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2297

It is worth lingering at Burton Dassett in the company of Sir Thomas Temple for a just little longer in order to note what he reveals about some of the horticultural techniques employed in his garden. Whilst contemporary gardening literature has a great deal to say about horticultural techniques, and whilst much of it claims to be written from experience, what Sir Thomas' correspondence offers us here is a rare insight into actual practice.

The vine cuttings mentioned above are a case in point. These had already been collected by Harry Rose from a garden in Stratford-upon-Avon and Sir Thomas issues very precise instructions as to what should be done with them so they do not die, as it seems was the fate of last year's cuttings.<sup>41</sup> Firstly, he instructed that the cuttings should be dealt with as quickly as possible 'the sooner after these are planted the more hope there is that they will grow'. Also, they were less likely to be affected by the frost if they are planted in the ground. They should be planted in a mixture of sand, enriched with 'beastes blood, if it may be gotton'. Some of the cuttings were to be set in clay and sent to Wolverton for planting there. Richard has recommended taking longer cuttings – with nine or ten joints or buds, as opposed to the usual six or seven. This allows for more of the joints to be planted in the ground, presumably increasing the chances of the cuttings taking root. Nevertheless, Sir Thomas hedges his bets, and instructs Rose to plant some longer cuttings and some shorter, as before. The cuttings should be set in the planting hole 'slope wise' and, he adds, the right way up, although Sir Thomas is confident that no-one he knows would 'commit

---

<sup>41</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2145, STT2287. I am grateful to Mairi MacDonald at the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust for first drawing my attention to photocopies of these two letters held at the SBTRO. It is worth noting in passing that these vine-cuttings have also been the subject of recent academic interest in another field, because the garden from which they were obtained was none other than that belonging to Master Hall, the physician from Stratford-upon-Avon. John Hall of course was the son-in-law of William Shakespeare and inherited the house and garden at New Place after the playwright's death in 1616. It is therefore possible that Shakespeare himself planted these vines! : 'A Document Concerning Shakespeare's Garden' *Huntington Library Bulletin*, No. 1 (1939), 199-201.

such an absurditye' as to plant them 'contrarywise down'.<sup>42</sup> Finally, they should be planted in a number of different locations, in case this will have any effect on their growth. Sir Thomas showed equal concern for some 'bayslips', which presumably are cuttings from a bay tree. Again, they should be planted as soon as possible 'lest thei should be killed' and he instructed that they should be set in a variety of locations, such as against the kitchen window, on the contraryside of the pales and some next to the door, but always in a shaded position, for they 'will prosper best in the shade, it is thought'.<sup>43</sup> Unfortunately, there is no record as to whether these experiments were successful or not, but as most of the above is based on sound horticultural practice, there is no reason why they should not have been.

It is also worth pausing to consider that many horticultural techniques used in the garden would inevitably have been borrowed from established agricultural practice. An example of this is the major concern with soil fertility. At a time when artificial fertilisers were not an option, a great deal of thought had to go into how best to fertilise the soil with animal manure, compost and other nutrient-rich additives such as rotted straw, potash and sludge from the bottom of rivers and ponds.<sup>44</sup> In addition, additives such as marl, sand, lime and ashes were also applied to soil to improve its structure, drainage and nutrient-holding ability and crop-rotation systems were implemented to ensure that the soil did not become

---

<sup>42</sup> Thirty years later, this method of taking cuttings is more or less reiterated by Sir Thomas Hanmer who from 'My owne observation of Vines' agrees that the best time to take cuttings is February, that they should be planted at an angle and that the buds should face upwards. However, he recommends cuttings of just four buds in length: *Garden Book*, p. 161.

<sup>43</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2285

<sup>44</sup> Joan Thirsk, *The Agrarian History of England and Wales*, Vol. 4, 1500-1640 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 168. Sir Thomas Temple makes frequent references to cleansing his ponds and 'scowring' his ditches – presumably this was why.

exhausted.<sup>45</sup> One of the first books to be published in English on agricultural practices was Fitzherbert's *Boke of Husbandry* (1523) and in it he discusses the 'dongeing and mucking' of fields, suggesting a two-field rotation system for the sowing of barley followed by a crop of wheat or rye, and manuring the field before the barley is sown. He notes that cattle produce better dung than horses, but that best of all is pigeon or dove dung, although he cautions it should be applied thinly as it is so rich.<sup>46</sup> Over one hundred years later, John Oglander still recommends that 'pigginsdoonge' is best to enrich 'Base and Barren' land, along with lime, marl, sea sand and ashes 'if you will play the good Housband and Phisition to your grownde'.<sup>47</sup> It is worth noting that a dove-house was a major feature of the garden at Nunwell House; that in 1629 Sir Thomas Temple commissioned a mason to make a pigeon house at Court Place and that at Trentham Hall in Staffordshire in May 1635, Raphe Sutton the carpenter built two turrets for the garden, to which were added two windows, 200yds of plaster work and 300 pigeon holes. These were clearly not insubstantial structures.<sup>48</sup> It was noted in the last chapter that pigeons and doves were raised as a source of food; it would seem that the dung was not to be wasted either, but put to good use on the ground, reinforcing once more the idea that although such pigeon houses could clearly be quite elaborate, their primary function was a utilitarian one.

However, waste products of all kinds were used for manuring. Sir Thomas' instructions for building a new stable for instance, include the fact that it must have 'A hole to flinge the horse dung forth to the banke on the north side of the said woolhouse', whilst ground on

---

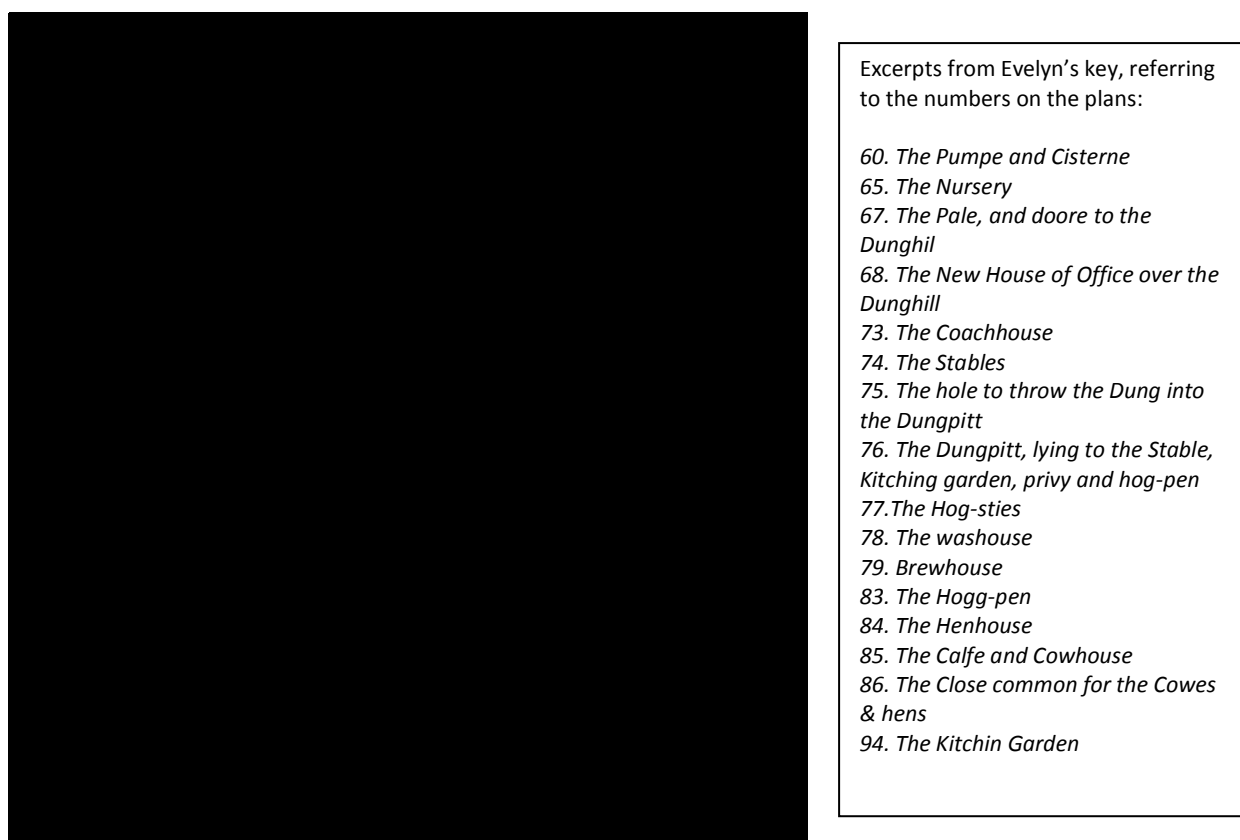
<sup>45</sup> Nowadays, as issues such as recycling of waste materials and organic farming methods are once more coming to the fore, we have much to learn from our gardening predecessors.

<sup>46</sup> John Fitzherbert, *The Boke of Husbandry* (1523), ed. by Rev. W Skeat (reprinted from the edition of 1534; London: Trübner, 1882), p. 27

<sup>47</sup> IOWRO, OG/AA/27, fols 75, 86

<sup>48</sup> IOWRO, OG/AA/26; Plan of Nunwell House, 1738; HL, Temple MSS, ST38 fol. 11; SRO, D593/R/1/2

which plants are to be set in his new paled garden should be ‘stoared with gardine stuffe’ for their better prosperity.<sup>49</sup> The vine-cuttings already discussed were to be planted in a mixture of sand and beasts’ blood and it cannot be a coincidence that Sir Thomas instructed Wattes the carpenter to provide ‘a peece of Oake to make the pryve house neare the Muckhill’ on the south side of the kitchen garden.<sup>50</sup> Later in the century, John Evelyn’s plan for his new garden at Sayes Court (c.1653) included a dung pit located in close proximity to the hog yard, the stable and the kitchen garden. The ‘new house of office’<sup>51</sup> was also conveniently situated here and technology included a pump and cistern ‘removed to the nursery for infusion of Dungs and watering the Garden’. It would be hard to find the cycle of waste, fertilisation and vegetable growth more graphically illustrated than this.



**Figure 30 Detail of the plan of John Evelyn's garden at Sayes Court, 1653**  
BL, Evelyn, Add.78628A

<sup>49</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2154, STT2296

<sup>50</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2145, STT2154

<sup>51</sup> House of Office = privy: *OED Online*

At the same time, John Broad notes in his extensive study of the estates of Sir Ralph Verney at Claydon in Buckinghamshire, that Sir Ralph gave gifts of potash, dung and pigeon dung to his tenant farmers – not, it seems, from altruistic motives, but in order to keep up the quality of the grassland and therefore the level of the rent.<sup>52</sup>

The supplying of the gardener with tools is an expense noted in most account books and one which adds a little more flesh to the bones of our knowledge of the work being carried out in these gardens. As we might expect, there are payments for items such as spades, hatchets, rakes, shovels, scyths and scyth stones, a variety of hooks, cutting knives, wheelbarrows and a garden roller.<sup>53</sup> More unusually, there are also payments for ‘powder and shot’ for the gardener - either as some kind of pest control, or perhaps he is responsible for the pigeons, doves and rabbits which were all likely to be have been raised on the estate for food – as well as payments for ‘nayles and skinnies’.<sup>54</sup> Elsewhere, there are references to ‘lether’, so it seems likely that these could have been nails and leather ties used, as mentioned in the accounts of the Reynalls of Forde in Devon, ‘to nail up the boughs of the trees in the garden’.<sup>55</sup> Other gardening equipment mentioned includes baskets, truggs, canvases and nets, either for gathering or protecting flowers, vegetables and fruits. The household accounts of Sir Thomas Pelham are particularly interesting for their mention of specific gardening equipment such as watering pots, a grafting saw and ‘two earthen pots for the nursery’.<sup>56</sup>

---

<sup>52</sup> John Broad, *Transforming English Rural Society: The Verneys and the Claydons, 1600-1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 146

<sup>53</sup> See for instance BL, Pelham, Add. 33147, fols 61<sup>v</sup>, 96<sup>v</sup>, 97; SRO, DR593/R/3/3-4; Gray, *Devon Household Accounts, Part 1*, p. 86; Munby, *Early Stuart Household Accounts*, pp. 171, 193

<sup>54</sup> See for instance Gray, *Devon Household Accounts, Part 1*, pp. 9, 17; Munby, *Early Stuart Household Accounts*, pp. 160, 162.

<sup>55</sup> Gray, *Devon Household Accounts, Part 1*, p. 39

<sup>56</sup> BL, Pelham, Add. 33147, fols 60<sup>v</sup>, 97, 101, 223

The Pelham accounts allude to other features which add to our picture of gardening at this time. There are references, for instance, to ‘the stilhouse’, which would have been used to distill herbs and flowers which were actually bought in for the purpose; there is a payment for instance of 1s ‘for jilliflowers that were used in the stilhouse’. Herbs were ‘gathered for the stilhouse this somer’ and used for medicinal purposes to make ‘diett drink’, as well as ‘poppy blosoms cowslips and other herbs for opiriall water’ which it is to be assumed is some kind of opium-based draught.<sup>57</sup> Given that Sir Thomas appeared, from reading the accounts at least, to be at best a health fanatic and at worst a hypochondriac, this extended use of garden produce is perhaps not surprising.

It is likely too that roses were distilled at Halland. Although not specifically mentioned here, the distilled water of roses was valued for its perfume – of more importance than we may now imagine in our over-sanitised world – and for its flavouring qualities: ‘The same being put in junketting dishes, cakes, sauces, and many pleasant things, giveth a fine and delectable taste’ noted Gerard in his *Herball*.<sup>58</sup> The clergyman and diarist Ralph Josselin wrote on 29th May 1646 that ‘my wife began to still roses’, and at Gorhambury House in Hertfordshire in 1638, the princely sum of £1 0 0 was paid for seven bushels of roses and another entry confirms a payment for ‘fower rose water bottles’.<sup>59</sup> William Lawson includes two still-houses in his plan of a garden. It would seem that the process of distilling was quite common - we know that many plants were grown primarily for their medicinal qualities and this is one way in which the plants would have been prepared for consumption or application. And as already observed in the discussion of fruits grown in

---

<sup>57</sup> BL, Pelham, Add. 33147, fols 125, 146, 157

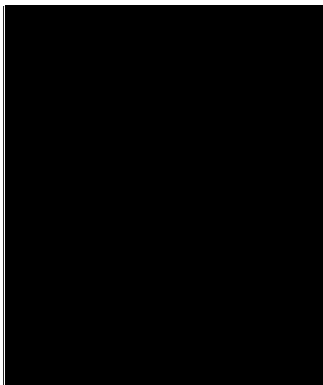
<sup>58</sup> Gerard, *Herball*, p. 1082

<sup>59</sup> *The Diary of Ralph Josselin 1616-1683*, ed. by Alan MacFarlane (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 61; Munby, *Early Stuart Household Accounts*, p. 172

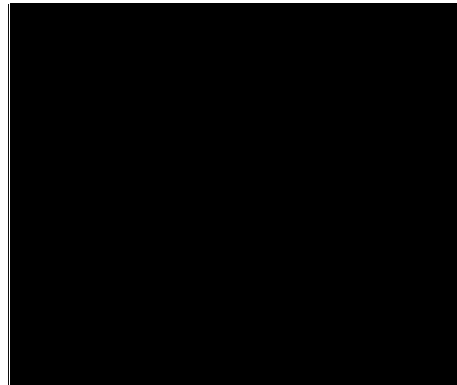


the garden, flavourings such as rose water, despite the work involved in obtaining them, must have added a welcome variation to the daily diet.

There was nothing new about the practice of distilling an extensive range of garden produce from roses to cabbages and leeks, the latter described for instance by Thomas Hyll in *The Gardeners Labyrinth*, but according to Gervase Markham, methods of distillation had become more efficient over the years.<sup>60</sup> He describes a vessel such as the one illustrated in Hyll's book as 'knowne and used everywhere', but that 'afterward there was another fashion invented, by which many vessels are heated together with only one fire [...] to the ende that with lesse cost and labour one might draw and distill a great quantitie of water'.



**Figure 31**  
Illustration of a still from *The Gardeners Labyrinth*, 1577



**Figure 32**  
Illustration of a still from *The Countrey Farme*, 1616

Although it is difficult to come to any definite conclusions from such scant evidence, there is nevertheless little to indicate in the foregoing that the roles of the workers in the garden and their skills and practices had altered in any significant way from the previous century, although the example of distilling cited above does reveal a degree of development of the

---

<sup>60</sup> Hyll, *Gardeners Labyrinth*, pp. 12, 88; Markham, *The Countrey Farme*, p. 565

techniques involved in carrying out older practices. On the other hand, in the case of Sir Thomas and his vine cuttings for instance, we have nothing with which to even compare it. As the seventeenth century progressed however, and to be discussed, it was to become a feature of the increasing importance and separation of the ornamental garden that gardening techniques, practices and even tools became more specific and specialised.

Purchases of garden seeds occur in all the sets of accounts giving an indication of the kind of produce that was being grown in gardens. Peas[e] and beans seem to be ubiquitous and are purchased in large quantities – variously measured in bushels, pecks and gallans. It has been suggested by Joan Thirsk that legumes were grown as a field crop as fodder for horses, sheep, pigeons and pigs, but whilst this may well have been the case, there is no doubt that they were also grown in a garden context and for human consumption.<sup>61</sup> John Gerard, Richard Gardiner of Shrewsbury and John Parkinson all refer to them as garden vegetables, although Parkinson does observe that they are planted in fields as well, not for animals, but because ‘serving for foode for the poorer sort [...] the quantity of them that are spent taketh up many acres of land’. He notes at the same time that pease are ‘a dish meate for the table of the rich as well as the poore’.<sup>62</sup> The accounts of John Willoughby of Leyhill in Devon show a payment to four women for bean setting, whilst his near-neighbours the Reynalls of Forde make a similar payment to four pea-setters.<sup>63</sup> Both the Reynall and Leyhill accounts also list regular payments for carrot seed, cucumber seed, turnip seed and cabbage plants, the latter also being a regular purchase at the Nunwell estate on the Isle of

---

<sup>61</sup> Joan Thirsk, *Food in Early Modern England: Phases, Fads, Fashions 1500-1760* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2007), pp. 171, 242

<sup>62</sup> Gerard, *Herball*, pp. 1041, 1046; Richard Gardiner, *Profitable Instructions for the Manuring, Sowing and Planting of Kitchen Gardens*, sig. C3<sup>v</sup>; Parkinson, *Paradisi*, pp. 521-2

<sup>63</sup> Gray, *Devon Household Accounts, Part 1*, pp. 124, 86

Wight.<sup>64</sup> As has been discussed elsewhere, peas and beans, along with other staple vegetables such as carrots, cabbage and turnips, had formed the basis of diet right across the social strata from medieval times, and, particularly in the more remote rural locations, there is no reason to presume that this would have changed much.

The Pelham accounts do indicate an extended range of vegetable seeds including parsnip, radish, lettes [lettuce] and ‘colliflower’.<sup>65</sup> Again, Parkinson notes that cauliflower was seldom grown in this country because good seed was hard to find and it was difficult to germinate<sup>66</sup> - whether the conditions in Sussex just happened to suit this vegetable, or whether their cultivation was an experiment by an enterprising gardener at Halland House is impossible to know.

There is of course no reason to assume that the range of seeds grown is limited to the varieties mentioned because in many cases normal practice would have been to collect seeds from plants and herbs to sow the following year, but because they were not being purchased, they did not appear in the household accounts. Richard Gardiner of Shrewsbury devotes the first chapters of his 1599 book on vegetable growing to the growing of plants specifically for seed production, which were sown and cultivated separately from the crops grown for harvesting and eating.<sup>67</sup> This method however, is not suited to all plants: as Thomas Hyll notes ‘Peas and Beanes for the Garden must have their seed changed every

---

<sup>64</sup> Gray, *Devon Household Accounts, Part I*, for instance pp. 11,13,127,142, 145; IOWRO, OG/AA/27, fol. 47

<sup>65</sup> BL, Pelham, Add. 33147, fols 78<sup>v</sup>, 125, 176<sup>v</sup>, 120<sup>v</sup>

<sup>66</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 469

<sup>67</sup> Gardiner, *Profitable Instructions*, sigs. A4-B3<sup>v</sup>

yeare, if not, the increase will be very smal, and grow lesse and lesse'.<sup>68</sup> The early seventeenth-century accounts certainly bear out this practice.

Aside from growing vegetables and herbs, the cultivation of fruit trees, and more particularly, the cultivation of exotic fruits continued to be of crucial importance into the seventeenth century. As well as the obvious benefits, the role of fruit as a gift and in hospitality remained a prestigious indicator of social standing within the community,<sup>69</sup> whilst new techniques for its successful cultivation were instigated and developed as more exotic fruits and plants were introduced from abroad.

Evidence of such gifts from household accounts is scarce, because no money changed hands. There were however payments, which it is to be assumed were 'tips', given to the bearers of the various gifts between households. 6d was given to 'baylief Jenkins messenger that sent me olives' and a shilling to 'my cozen Nicolas Kemis his servant that sent me apples' by the Aubery household.<sup>70</sup> Similarly, 'Lord Careys gardener bringing peaches', 'Lady Jenings gardener with plums' and 'Lady Winwoods footman with grap[e]s' were all paid at the kitchen door of the Gorhambury household.<sup>71</sup> Gentry correspondence offers a little more information. For instance, gifts of fruit and other produce are regularly given and received by the Wynn family of Gwydir in the Conwy valley. John Wynn of Gwydir's gift of plums to Sir Richard Bulkley of Beaumaris in return for 'the hogshead of Graves wine' has already been mentioned, but other gifts from Beaumaris include, in December 1618, 'claret, pickled quinces, six lemons, a dozen small

---

<sup>68</sup> Hyll, *Gardeners Labyrinth*, p. 90

<sup>69</sup> John Parkinson notes for instance that 'figges are served to the table [...] as a dainty banquet to entertaine a friend, which seldom passeth without a cup of wine to wash them downe': *Paradisi*, p. 567

<sup>70</sup> Bowen, *Household Accounts of Sir Thomas Aubrey*, pp. 45, 52

<sup>71</sup> Munby, *Early Stuart Household Accounts*, pp. 175-6

oranges and 100 chestnuts and walnuts ‘for my Lady’. Another entry in 1620 mentions that although a buck is to be sent to the Bishop of Bangor, the promised lemons cannot be sent because they are under lock and key in my lady’s closet!<sup>72</sup> Oranges and lemons appear frequently in the context of gifts, but it is not clear whether they have been ‘bought in’ - there are references elsewhere to the costs of oranges and lemons - or whether they have been grown in the gardens of North Wales. This seems extremely unlikely however, particularly in view of a letter sent from Sir John Wynn to his father in January 1613 who writes from Molins [Moulins] in France that there are ‘orangers, citrioners and meurtriers’ growing in the garden, but which would bring no profit and a great deal of pain to growers in England.<sup>73</sup>

Nevertheless, other fruits were grown with great success. Robert Sydney’s gifts of fruit to the King and Queen and to his friends at court have already been mentioned, although at times his garden seems overly prolific: ‘I thanck you for the letter and peaches’ he writes to his wife in September 1609, ‘but you send me such store as I have not friends enow to bestow them on’. As well as fresh fruit, he also gives fruit trees to his friends: ‘I have promised my Lady of Suffolck twoe Melicote trees, the one grafted, the other ungrafted, and one ungrafted to Sr Th. Monson’.<sup>74</sup> Sir Thomas Temple’s memorandum books and correspondence reveal that he has received fruit trees from friends and family and there is no reason to believe that the arrangement was not reciprocated.<sup>75</sup> Because of the degree of knowledge and resources required to grow fruit trees successfully, it continued to remain

---

<sup>72</sup> *Calendar of Wynn Papers*, **851**, p. 136; **1131**, p. 182

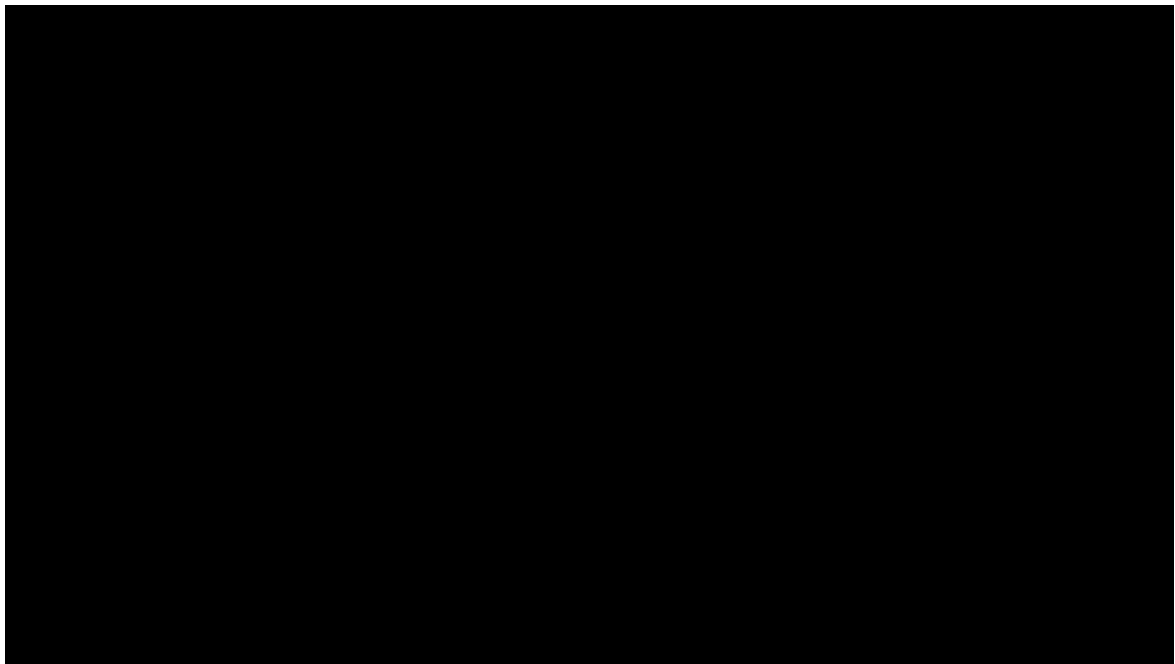
<sup>73</sup> *Calendar of Wynn Papers*, **637**, p. 101. Boxes and baskets for ‘oranges and lemons’ also appear in the Gorhambury accounts, but again it is not at all clear where these have come from: see for instance Munby, *Early Stuart Household Accounts*, pp. 166, 174, 175

<sup>74</sup> HMC, *De L'Isle MSS*, IV, p. 161; p. 244

<sup>75</sup> See for instance HL, Temple MSS, ST38, fol. 31<sup>v</sup>, STT2285, STT2290

an important indicator of the wealth and status of the garden owner, whether manifested by the sight of an extensive and flourishing orchard, or through the production of exotic fruit for gifts or for the table.

A portrait of the family of Sir Thomas Lucy hanging over the fireplace in the great Hall at Charlecote Park in Warwickshire confirms this view:



**Figure 33** *Sir Thomas Lucy III and his Family, c.1620*  
from Strong, *Artist and the Garden*, p.38

Such portraits played a crucial role in the assertion of status, including as they did details that reflected the wealth and preoccupations of the family. The Lucy portrait shows the family arranged in a richly carpeted room and includes two dogs, a falcon on a perch, books on the table and a view of the garden in the background. The importance of the role of produce from the garden is emphasised by the prominent position in the picture of a bowl of cherries being held out by the eldest daughter to her mother, who is depicted

taking some of the fruit out of the bowl. The eldest son and heir is climbing a flight of stairs from the garden and into the room, bearing a bowl of peaches – a fruit which John Parkinson describes as ‘well accepted with all the Gentry of the Kingdome’.<sup>76</sup> Furthermore, the fruit is not just simply depicted in the portrait, it is shown being offered by the eldest children as a gift to their parents. The fact that Sir Thomas Lucy has chosen to display these particular aspects of his household in this portrait reveals a great deal about their significance as symbols of his family’s status.

Whilst the importance of growing fruit may have remained constant however, experimentation with new methods of cultivation began during the seventeenth century, although as shall be shown, not always with a great deal of success. The tried and trusted method of growing fruit trees within the protected microclimate of a walled garden continued – Sir John Oglander grew ‘Apricockes, Melecatouns and figges’ in his walled garden on the Isle of Wight and Sir Thomas Temple planted apricots and grapes in his parlour garden along the south wall of the house. He intended to allow the grape vines to climb up onto the roof tiles and ‘be there the better ripened’.<sup>77</sup>

However, as more exotic and tender fruits began to be brought into England from the continent, gardeners realised the critical importance of protecting these plants from the cold and in trying to emulate the conditions in which these plants grew naturally: a variety of ingenious methods for doing this were explored. Gervase Markham in particular offers a number of suggestions. In *The English Husbandman* (1613), he talks of ‘divers Noblemen, Gentlemen’ who have expended time, labour and cost in trying to preserve their fruit trees

---

<sup>76</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 582

<sup>77</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2347

from inclement weather, but to no avail. However the one method he has seen ‘in one of the greatest Noblemens gardens in the kingdome’ which is ‘certaine and unfallible’ was to build a large ‘pentisse’<sup>78</sup> at the top of the wall and over the tops of the trees which are planted against it, which will protect the trees from damaging storms, frosts and winds.<sup>79</sup> In his next chapter, on the cultivation of vines, he describes in explicit detail an elaborate construction of bricks, wood and glass, which sounds remarkably like a greenhouse, in which to grow the grapes. Once the structure is built, the vines are planted outside it, but next to suitable square holes left in the brickwork at the bottom so that ‘as your Vine groweth, you shall draw it through those holes, and as you use to plash the Vine against a wall, so you shall plash this against the glasse window, on the in-side’. Thus the sun will hasten the ripening and increase the size of the grapes; the house will protect the fruit from inclement weather and they will hang ‘unrotted or withered’ until Christmas.<sup>80</sup> Regrettably, evidence of such a house ever being built has yet to be found, although the wooden pentisses he mentions appear very similar to those described at Beddington.<sup>81</sup>

In Markham’s other great work on gardening and husbandry, his edited edition of Charles Estienne’s *Maison Rustique*, published as *The Countrie Farme* in 1616, he addresses at length the problems of growing citrus, and particularly orange trees. He begins by acknowledging ‘their great tendernes and incredible daintinesse’ and actually admits that they will do a great deal better to leave them where they are in their native soil! Nevertheless, ‘if it please the Lord of the Farme to procure them.....’, here is his advice.<sup>82</sup>

---

<sup>78</sup> Pentisse [penthouse] - a sloping roof or ledge placed against a wall or over a door or window to provide shelter from the weather : *OED Online*.

<sup>79</sup> Markham, *English Husbandman*, p. 129

<sup>80</sup> Markham, *English Husbandman*, p. 131

<sup>81</sup> See pp. 95-6 above. Perhaps Sir Francis Carew is the nobleman to whom Markham refers?

<sup>82</sup> Markham, *Countrie Farme*, p. 298



Markham's stated aim in this book – which it must be remembered is a translation from the original French – is to reconcile the husbandry of France, Italy and Spain 'to agree with ours here in England'. However as previously noted, whilst Markham makes an admirable effort to do this, he does not actually change any of the original text, but simply adds to it. As well as facing the reader with contradictory information, the result is that it is not always easy to work out where he is referring to continental practice and where he is referring to English practice. We know for instance from John Wynn's letter to his father, referred to above, that even in central France, the citrus trees were removed in the winter to a house made purposely for them.<sup>83</sup> Markham mentions twice the practice of removing the trees 'into vaults under the earth, carried thither upon little Wheelebarrowes'. However, his own advice is that orange trees will do better planted in the ground, so obviously removing them to a warmer place in the winter is not an option. Instead he describes how the trees should be covered 'with a good store of boughes, held up with props, or else to make for everie one of them a lodging of Mats, with door in it open to the South'. Great care must be taken to ensure that the plants are completely covered, although the tops and sides should be given plenty of room and not be 'pinched'. He cautiously advises that if the weather is 'gentle, meeke, and faire' that the covers may be opened so the tree 'may enjoy the present heat of the Sunne'. He also recommends the lighting of fires around the trees in periods of extreme cold.<sup>84</sup> Whether any of these measures was successful or not is unrecorded, and doubtful.<sup>85</sup> John Parkinson noted in *Paradisi in Sole* that as orange trees are 'so hardly preserved in this our cold climate' he will not trouble to give 'any further

---

<sup>83</sup> See fn. 72 above

<sup>84</sup> Markham, *Countrey Farme*, pp. 300-1

<sup>85</sup> Although I have it on good authority from local growers that the practice of lighting fires under trees to protect them from frost was carried out in the plum orchards in the Vale of Evesham until the 1950s, orange trees are far less hardy than plum trees and therefore less likely to respond favourably to this treatment.

relation of their ordering'.<sup>86</sup> Elsewhere however, like Markham, he does pass on some advice to those who insist on keeping them – observing that some plant them in 'great square boxes' so that they can be moved into a house or 'close-gallerie' for the winter-time, others cover them with boards or cloths, while other protect them by the warmth of a stove (a kind of winter or glass house). Nevertheless, he concludes that 'no tent or meane provision will preserve them'.<sup>87</sup> Elsewhere he dismisses the practice of forcing plants in hot stoves because, in his experience, they will perish.<sup>88</sup>

What is interesting here is that whilst early modern gardeners clearly appreciated the need for good soil, water and warmth if tender plants were to thrive, they had not yet identified the last factor that is essential to plant life and that is, as we now know, light. They realised the importance of the sun, but only because it gave warmth – it was to be the end of the eighteenth century before scientists observed the link between sunlight and plant life and well into the following century before the essential process of photosynthesis was discovered. It is no wonder these plants being brought from the long, bright, sunny days of more southerly climes could not thrive, because not only were they having to adapt to the short, gloomy, overcast days of the English winter (and sometimes summer!), they were also, by being wrapped up or brought into closed galleries to protect them from the cold, being unwittingly deprived of essential light.

One other area in which a change in the growing of fruit can be traced over this period is the cultivation of vines, but what is noticeable here is a decline in the practice. It is well known that in Roman and medieval times, the growing of vines in England was common,

---

<sup>86</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 551

<sup>87</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 584

<sup>88</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 25

but by the end of the seventeenth century it was no longer being embraced with much enthusiasm. Although garden writers all included a section in their books on vines, they issued their advice with caution. John Parkinson observes that it is ‘a fruitlesse labour for any man to strive these daies to make a good Vineyard in England’, noting that as the weather is no longer warm enough to ripen the grapes, it is not possible to make any good wine. He suggests instead that vines be grown for grapes to eat as fruit.<sup>89</sup> As we have seen, Markham recommends growing grapes, if one must, within the shelter of a house in the garden, because they will not ‘by any meanes prosper in many parts of our kingdome’.<sup>90</sup> Lawson dismisses vines as something which only thrive in other countries.<sup>91</sup> Household accounts and other records which refer to vines are all located in the south of England: at Forde in Devon there is a payment for pruning the vines; John Oglander and Thomas Temple both refer to the growing of vines, but in neither case do we have any idea whether or not this was a successful enterprise.<sup>92</sup> As was discussed in Chapter 2, it seems that by this time the climate in England was definitely cooler than it had been in previous centuries and the conditions simply were no longer suitable for the cultivation of vines.<sup>93</sup>

From the foregoing discussion then it can be seen that the preoccupations of the Elizabethan gardener continued into the seventeenth century. Garden layouts remained essentially the same, experimentation with new plants and techniques for cultivating them continued to be explored and, as has been amply demonstrated, the utilitarian aspects of the

---

<sup>89</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 553

<sup>90</sup> Markham, *English Husbandman*, p. 131

<sup>91</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, p. 8

<sup>92</sup> Gray, *Devon Household Accounts, Part I*, p. 14; OG/AA/29; HL, Temple MSS, STT2287

<sup>93</sup> John Parkinson offers an interesting alternative explanation for the decline in the cultivation of vines: ‘I have read, that manie Monastries in this Kingdome, having Vineyards, had as much wine made therefrom, as sufficed their covents yeare by yeare: but long since they have been destroyed, and the knowledge how to order a Vineyard is also utterly perished with them’: *Paradisi*, p. 552.

garden remained of paramount importance. However new ideas, new plants and new aspirations were beginning to make their mark and it is to these changes that we must now turn to examine how these fresh influences were being manifest in the gardens of early modern England.



### 3.2 New aspirations: Changes in gardening practice

Perhaps the best evidence that alerts us to the fact that changes were taking place in the seventeenth-century garden is, in the first instance, to be found in contemporary gardening literature. As was discussed in Chapter 1, it is possible to discern a fundamental shift in emphasis from the earlier sixteenth-century works which relied heavily on classical and renaissance texts for their authority to a new approach to both gardening and garden writing based on empirical knowledge and experience. As shown, the works of Markham, and more particularly those of Lawson and Parkinson, are based on the authors' own experience and their concern is to pass on practical advice, relevant to local conditions, to their readers. These writers now had a new audience for their books: those who wanted real, proven advice which they could put into practice in their own gardens. One unforeseen result of this is that, whilst continuing to bear in mind that such literature can often be prescriptive, this new approach at last offers the historian a literature that is beginning to reflect what was actually going on in contemporary gardens.

In the case of John Parkinson this was especially so, for, as was mentioned in the Introduction, not only did he have an extensive knowledge of plants and flowers gained through observation and experience, but the same meticulous approach to his work as an apothecary, gardener and writer placed him in a unique position to act as a critical observer of contemporary practice. A closer examination of his life and work therefore, as evidenced in his two publications, and in particular *Paradisi in Sole*, will repay dividends, providing valuable insight into the kind of changes that were occurring in the early seventeenth-century garden.

As has been established, John Parkinson was an apothecary by trade, earning his living preparing and selling plant-based medicines. He began his apprenticeship in 1584, gained his freedom of the Company of Grocers in 1593 and by 1594 had established his own apothecary shop just outside Ludgate. He was instrumental in the setting up of the Society of Apothecaries in 1617 and was elected a warden to the new society. The next few years were not easy ones, as many problems arose as a result of the split from the powerful Grocers' Company. The legal wranglings eventually reached the Star Chamber, but the session, presided over by Sir Francis Bacon, found heavily in favour of the Apothecaries, reiterating the ruling that only members of the Society were now allowed to make and sell medicines, the Grocers' losing their right to do so. This judgement gave the Apothecaries a legitimacy to build their trade, becoming respected by doctors, physicians and botanists alike. It also had the personal backing of the King and reflected the spirit of the times, representing an essential step forward in the foundation of a scientific medical system as the mixing and dispensing of medicines was now regulated by the Society. Parkinson's reputation grew over the years – he was, for instance, a major contributor to the *Schedule of Medycines* commissioned by the Society in 1618 – and by 1640 his expertise had been officially recognised in his appointment as *Botanicus Regius*, Herbalist to the King.<sup>1</sup>

As noted in Chapter 1, one of the factors that allowed Parkinson's knowledge and expertise to grow was his passionate belief in the crucial importance of observing and understanding the plants that were the essential tools of his trade. He did not write about a plant until he had seen how it would grow and had observed its properties for himself: he notes, for

---

<sup>1</sup> Anna Parkinson, *Nature's Alchemist*; Cecil Wall, *The History of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries* (London: Oxford University Press for the Wellcome Historical Medical Museum, 1963); Parkinson, *Theatrum Botanicum*, To the Reader

instance, of a variety of Spignell that ‘when it is better grown up with me [...] I shall the better judge’.<sup>2</sup> He does not yet feel that he is in a position to make authoritative comment. We also know that in order to grow and study the hundreds of plants mentioned in his books and used in his trade, John Parkinson established and maintained an extensive garden at Long Acre near Covent Garden.<sup>3</sup> A list recorded by another English herbalist John Goodyer, who visited Parkinson’s garden in 1617, contains the names of 484 plants apparently growing there and the comment above regarding the Spignell variety would indicate that at the time of writing in 1640, Parkinson was still acquiring new plants for his garden. He notes elsewhere that he did not record details of the many rare plants that he tried to grow in his garden but without success.<sup>4</sup> As well then as the plants we know about, there were obviously considerably more that we don’t, so the actual number of plants he was attempting to cultivate must have been even greater than that already indicated in the above evidence. Although little else is known about the garden, these facts alone would suggest that it must have been several acres in extent and would therefore have been one of the largest and best-known gardens in London.<sup>5</sup>

However, whilst Parkinson’s role as an apothecary gave him the motivation to grow and study plants, it is clear too that he was an enthusiastic and skilful gardener and that he applied the careful, scientific method which established his reputation as an apothecary to his gardening practice. In *Paradisi in Sole*, he comments many times that men should no longer believe in ancient reports, tales and fables, for ‘when they come to the triall, they

---

<sup>2</sup> Parkinson, *Theatrum Botanicum*, p. 889

<sup>3</sup> Parkinson himself refers to ‘my garden in Long acre’ in *Theatrum Botanicum*, p. 609.

<sup>4</sup> ‘if in my former days I had thought to have published the fruits of my Garden, I had then beene more curious to have taken descriptions of a number of Plants, which have perished with me and now I want’: Parkinson, *Theatrum Botanicum*, p. 1091

<sup>5</sup> Riddell, ‘John Parkinson’s Long Acre garden’, pp. 112-124.



all vanish away like smoake'.<sup>6</sup> In stark contrast to William Harrison, who was marvelling over fifty years earlier that gardeners nowadays were so 'curious and cunning' that they do 'what they list with Nature', Parkinson, on the contrary, asserts that 'we onely have them [plants] as nature hath produced them, and so they remaine'.<sup>7</sup> He viewed practices such as soaking seeds in coloured dyes to make the blooms a particular colour or applying 'sents' such as cinnamon or cloves under the bark of trees to make the fruits take on those flavours as non-sensical. If anyone had actually tried these techniques, as he had done, they would *know* that they didn't work. He reports making many trials with many different types of plants of the various methods that are reported to change their natures, but when put to the test 'I could never see the effect desired, but rather in many of them the losse of my plants'.<sup>8</sup> Once again, the importance of practical experimentation and observation as a basis for knowledge is emphasised. He hopes 'by reason' to 'perswade many in the truth' and the truth that he is so anxious to convey is that nothing exists that was not found in nature first, and if men say they have created 'by art' plants that are not as they are found in nature, then they are liars, 'feigning and boasting often of what they would have, as if they had it'.<sup>9</sup> He asserts that all these 'rules and directions set down in bookes, so confidently, as if the matters were without all doubt or question [...] they are all but meere idle tales and fancies'. He is absolutely confident of his own observations and experience and equally confident, if modest, in his conclusions: 'although they have not been amplified with such Philosophical arguments and reasons, as one of greater learning might have done, yet they are truely and sincerely set down'.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>6</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p.23

<sup>7</sup> Harrison, *Description of England*, p. 265; Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 23

<sup>8</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 23

<sup>9</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 22

<sup>10</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 25

It may well seem that for the times Parkinson was advocating somewhat radical notions, but actually what he says here aligns itself alongside Baconian ideas of advancement and knowledge, which, as shown in Chapter 1, lent an intellectual respectability to practical experimentation in areas such as gardening. In his book, Parkinson was reflecting changing times and attitudes, which gave him the confidence to communicate his own experiences in this way. He offers an alternative explanation to the curiosity and cunning of gardeners referred to by Harrison. Whilst maintaining that nature cannot be changed or altered – that is in God’s hands – what the gardener can do, by careful selection of the better flowers, nurturing, ‘good ordering and looking unto’, is to *improve* what can be found in nature: it is possible, for instance, that flowers can be made ‘somewhat fairer or larger’ by the intervention of man.<sup>11</sup> Likewise, whilst observing that no man can make flowers ‘to spring at what time of the yeare he will’, Parkinson nevertheless demonstrates that it is perfectly viable, by careful choice of the right plants, to have flowers in the garden every month of the year.<sup>12</sup> As far as he was concerned, the role of the gardener was not to try and control nature, but to work in harmony with it in order to bring it to perfection.

However, it was not just his extensive knowledge of plants and the innovative way in which Parkinson chose to disseminate it that makes this book such an important source of

---

<sup>11</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 23. The fact is that many of the phenomena being observed and recorded by Parkinson are processes that occur quite accidentally in nature, but they were not processes that were understood by early modern gardeners. For instance, we now know that cross pollination of flower varieties and species naturally brings about variations in colour, flower size and so on – and this is even more likely to occur in a garden situation where flowers and plants that would not normally be found growing in the same place are planted in close proximity to one another. And it was not understood until as late as the twentieth century that the much-admired variegation in tulip colours is in fact caused by a viral disease – Parkinson put this natural occurrence down to rogue gardeners digging up the bulbs and swapping them! He also noticed that in many cases the variations did not last – again what he was observing but not understanding were processes such as natural selection, causing weaker varieties to die out and stronger ones to continue or the fact that in subsequent years, flowers simply revert to type. Again, as it is now known, the only way to ensure that a plant appears the same year after year is to clone it by vegetative propagation, rather than by collecting seeds – even then this does not take into account variations caused by disease, infections and other mutations.

<sup>12</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 24

information about early seventeenth-century gardening. Aside from his hundreds of pages of plant descriptions, in *Paradisi in Sole* Parkinson also offers gardening advice to his readers: as well as which plants to choose, how to plant them, how to look after and how to maintain and propagate them, he advises on garden design, composting, hard landscaping, how to make wind breaks and ‘hot beds’ to force young plants in the spring and so on. As ever, his advice is entirely practical, based either on his own experience, or interestingly, on what he sees going on in gardens around him. Parts of this book read like a review of contemporary practice, with Parkinson’s own experience and opinions added. So, for instance, he writes on the sowing and gathering of seeds that ‘our chieftest and greatest gardeners now adaies, doe so provide for themselves every year, that from their owne grounds they gather seede of many herbes that they sowe again’.<sup>13</sup> This, as has been noted previously, was common practice and Parkinson reiterates that this is what gardeners nowadays are doing. However, he adds that some seeds ‘are continually brought from beyond [the] Sea unto us’, because the foreign climate will bring them to perfection in a way that the English climate will not. As noted above, Parkinson has learnt this to his cost – many of the plants he has tried to raise from overseas have perished.

He discusses various methods of propagating plants, in particular with regard to gilliflowers, which he describes as ‘the chieftest flowers of account in all our English Gardens’. There are two ways to successfully increase these fair flowers he says:

the one is by slipping, which is *the old and ready usuall* way, best known in this Kingdome; the other is more sure, perfect, ready, and of *later invention* [...] by laying downe the branches.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 463

<sup>14</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 18 (my emphasis)

Both methods, using cuttings or by layering, are ‘frequently used’ and, if carried out correctly, both will give good results. He adds meticulously detailed instructions, offering at the same time a number of explanations as to why such propagating methods sometimes fail – not only is he advising his readers what to do, he is also advising them on what not to do (and for what it is worth, his advice would make perfect sense to any gardener today). This indicates once again the stress on observation and experience as well as giving us an idea of the kind of practices that people were carrying out in their gardens. Other small details that can be added to our picture of the garden are that he suggests transplanting the rooted cuttings either into the ground in beds or into pots; they should be kept watered either using a watering pot, or by setting the pots into containers half full of water. As to pest control, there seem to be as many methods tried then as now (with apparently the same degree of success!) and he goes through ‘many waies and inventions’ to destroy earwigs, enthusiastic nibblers of gilliflowers, offering his own verdict as to the ‘best and most usual things now used’ being beasts’ hooves, upturned on long canes stuck into the ground, to draw up the pests away from the plant from where they can be easily knocked out by the gardener and ‘with ones foot may be trode to peeeces’.<sup>15</sup> Many other examples abound, and reading Parkinson’s detailed instructions and explanations, it is not difficult to conjure up a picture of the early seventeenth-century gardener tending his plot, gathering and sowing seeds, nurturing and watering cuttings, protecting his tender young plants and fighting the never-ending battle against ‘infestuous vermine’.<sup>16</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> This method, although using small flower pots rather than horse hooves, is once again being recommended by organic gardeners today.

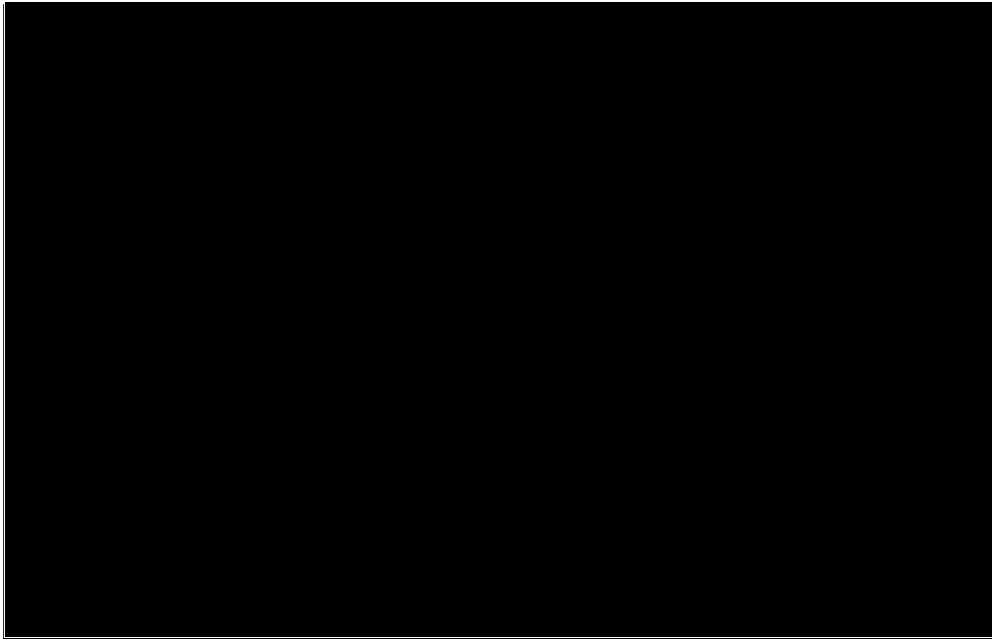
<sup>16</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 28

As well as such down-to-earth advice, Parkinson also offers a fascinating overview of fashions in gardening, a notable example being his description of the various methods and materials that can be employed to set out the form of ‘knots, trayles and other compartments’ in the garden. These can be living materials – and he goes through the pros and cons of a variety of different plants commonly used in this way, including germander, hyssop, thyme and lavender, but eventually recommending a relatively new plant introduction, dwarf French or Dutch box. This is interesting in itself as, although box has been used commonly ever since as an edging plant, Parkinson appears to be the first person to recommend its use as such in English gardens. He considers it a ‘marvailous fine ornament’, perfect for bordering knots, because it is low-growing, slow-growing, evergreen and can be ‘cut and formed into any fashion one will’.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, knots can equally be formed of dead materials such as lead, wooden boards or tiles. Here he is even more forthright in offering his opinions. He clearly doesn’t approve of the idea of using lead borders, ‘cut out like the battlements of a Church’, although this fashion has obviously ‘delighted some, who have accounted it stately’. However, in his opinion, lead is too hot in the summer and too cold in the winter. He also describes the surprising practice of using sheepbones to mark out the patterns of the knots – set side by side, over time they will become white and ‘prettily grace out the ground’. The fashion of using jaw-bones on the other hand, a practice he attributes to ‘the Low Countries and other places beyond the seas’, is so gross and base that he will make no further mention of it! The best of dead materials though, in his opinion, are pebbles, which he describes as the most recent fashion:

---

<sup>17</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, pp. 607, 6

And lastly (for it is the latest invention) round whitish or blewish pebble stones, of some reasonable proportion and bignesse, neither too great nor too small, have been used by some.



**Figure 34** This photograph of a representation of the 17th century *La Seigneurie Gardens* in Sark shows how this method of bordering beds might be successfully employed.

Photograph by author.

From the way he is writing, it seems that he doesn't necessarily have direct experience of laying out a garden in this way himself, but he has clearly seen other gardens, talked to other gardeners, taken into account their views and formed his own impressions. In passing on all these opinions, prejudices, likes and dislikes, John Parkinson is giving us here a wonderful picture of just one aspect of gardening (the forming of knots) in early seventeenth-century London. As he concludes himself: 'thus, Gentlemen, I have shewed you all the varieties that I know are used by any in our Countrey, that are worth the reciting'.<sup>18</sup>

---

<sup>18</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, pp. 6-7

There are other examples, but the point here is that Parkinson shows himself to be aware of changes in practice and changes in fashion – even if he doesn't always approve of them. This is not just prescriptive advice, but a report of practice that is going on around him and this is one more aspect of this book that makes it such a valuable documentation of contemporary gardening practice.

But first and foremost, this is a book about plants and flowers and Parkinson places them firmly at both the centre of his book and at the centre of the garden. His enthusiasm for the beauty of plants shines through. The opening decades of the century had seen a huge increase in the number of plants available. For the last thirty years, what he delightfully refers to as 'outlandish' plants had been arriving in London from all over the world, many from the Mediterranean region, in particular from Spain, Portugal, Italy and North Africa (the Barbary), but also from the New World: North and South America, the Bermudas and the West Indies.<sup>19</sup> Although no plant hunter himself – there is no evidence that Parkinson ever left London once he established his business there – his interest, both as an apothecary and as a gardener, made him a passionate collector and cultivator of these exotic plants. Whether obtained through his wide circle of friends, contacts and commissioned agents or purchased in the London markets, Parkinson had a whole host of new plants and flowers with which to furnish his garden and about which to write.

Although he does include a discussion of English flowers, in which he covers all the usual suspects – primroses, violets, columbines, pansies, poppies, roses and 'the Queene of delight and of flowers, Carnations and gilliflowers', because these are so well known to all,

---

<sup>19</sup> Riddell, 'John Parkinson's Long Acre garden', pp. 113-14

he intends to pass over them briefly.<sup>20</sup> He devotes far more time to his descriptions and instructions regarding outlandish flowers, many of which are plants that grow from bulbs such as crocus, tulips, iris, anemones and so on. He admires these fine flowers for many reasons, but for him, their outstanding quality is that, as alluded to above, they help to provide colour and interest in the garden throughout the year: they ‘shew forth their beauty and colours so early in the yeare, that they seeme to make a Garden of delight even in the Winter time [...] the more to entice us to their delight’.<sup>21</sup> Of native plants, although primroses and violets showed their faces in the spring, most of the flowers that traditionally adorned the English garden only had a brief flowering season in the summer, leaving the garden bereft of colour for much of the year.<sup>22</sup> So what these exotic introductions were providing was not just new varieties of flowers, but also a whole new way of furnishing a garden, because now plants could be selected – and Parkinson supplies appropriate guidance on choice – in order to provide flowers in the garden for every month of the year. The importance of this cannot be underestimated, and Parkinson is to be commended for moving so quickly in response to this new phenomenon.

But his admiration did not end there. Many of these plants he describes as ‘orderly’ and ‘stately’ because by their very nature they grow upright and ‘rise almost to an equall height, which causeth the greater grace’. They can be planted in an ordered fashion, in rows or blocks, and be trusted to stay there – unlike many English plants that have a tendency to spread and ramble in a totally disordered way. In a manner reminiscent of a

---

<sup>20</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 11

<sup>21</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 8

<sup>22</sup> Dutch gardeners apparently had the converse problem as their obsession with growing tulips left them without flowers and colour in their gardens in the summer: Anne Goldgar, *Tulipmania: Money, Honor, and Knowledge in the Dutch Golden Age* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2007), p. 50. This short summer flowering season also offers one explanation as to why flowers did not appear to be a major feature of sixteenth century gardens.



modern TV gardening programme in their quest to appeal to an ever-wider audience, he advises that this quality makes them useful for small gardens, because they take up less space. Tulips in particular, by virtue of their many colours, can be planted in such a way that they resemble ‘a peece of curious needle-worke, or peece of painting’ and by choosing a succession of varieties that flower at slightly different times, it is possible to keep a border or bed in flower for over three months.<sup>23</sup> He even manages to invest these plants with attributes of gentility: ‘they carry so stately and delightfull a forme [...] that there is no Lady or Gentlewoman of any worth that is not caught with this delight’.<sup>24</sup> These are all qualities that inform a new approach to gardening, and although Parkinson cannot be credited with the introduction of new plants into England, he can certainly claim some credit for seizing the moment and showing people how best to display them in their gardens.

But new plants also required new techniques to be learned in order to grow them successfully, and ‘because our English Gardiners are all or the most of the them utterly ignorant in the ordering of these Out-landish flowers’, Parkinson himself will ‘take upon mee the forme of a new Gardiner, to give instructions to those that will take pleasure in them’. At first sight this seems a somewhat arrogant stand on Parkinson’s part, but actually, if people – gardeners in particular – had never seen these plants before, why should they know what to do with them? He begins with the basics – which way up to plant the bulb for instance, before moving on to more detailed instructions on how to nurture tender plants grown from seeds, how to protect them from the cold with straw and

---

<sup>23</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 14

<sup>24</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 9. Parkinson often appeals specifically to gentlewomen - perhaps in deference to Queen Henrietta Maria to whom this book was dedicated. For more on Parkinson and status in the garden, see Chapter 5.

advising only to water them with water that has been standing in the sun and not drawn straight from the well. But even more fundamental than this, gardeners were now required to rethink their traditional cycle of planting: it was ‘the usuall custom’ for English flowering plants to be planted in the spring and removed at the end of the summer, but many of the new varieties now available, particularly the bulbs, needed to be planted in the previous year, during July, August or September, and then left in the ground over the winter in order for them to be ready to produce their spring display of colour. Not only this, but these plants would also have to be grown in separate beds from the English flowers, otherwise they would be disturbed when the latter were dug up at the end of the season.<sup>25</sup> Again we are reminded that the introduction of these new plants did far more than simply provide a wider variety of flowers for the garden – Parkinson draws our attention to the fact that new methods, techniques and ways of thinking also had to be adopted in order to accommodate them.

However, as well as new plants, new practices and new approaches all being reflected in this book, what probably remains the most remarkable feature of *Paradisi in Sole* is that it is the first book to consider that the ornamental value of the plants within it can be the primary purpose of a garden, being included for no other reason than that they are ‘very beautifull, delightfull and pleasant’, not only a worthy subject for a book, but also worthy of their own garden.<sup>26</sup> It recommends that, where possible, they be separated into a new

---

<sup>25</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 13

<sup>26</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 8. It should be noted that the Flemish physician Matthias L’Obel in his 1576 *Stirpium Observationes* had included plants solely for their decorative value and there is evidence that Parkinson was heavily influenced by this man’s work, his copy of the book being heavily annotated with notes of his own: Anna Parkinson, *Nature’s Alchemist*, p. 71. However, L’Obel was not a gardener or a garden writer, but a physician and botanist and nor were any of his books, including this one, published in English.

garden: the garden of pleasant flowers, or the garden of pleasure.

Parkinson of course was not the first person to advocate a separate garden for flowers: the illustrations of medieval gardens discussed in Chapter 2 indicate small, enclosed areas with grass, flowery meads, fruit trees and flower beds, clearly the preserve of the elite and set aside for leisure and pleasure. Privy gardens too were simply that – private areas, reserved exclusively for one person or group of people, usually a king or queen. However, although these may well have been separate ornamental areas filled with flowers and reserved for pleasure, this is not the issue here – the point is that they were not separated because they were flower gardens, they were separated to keep them private. Surfleet's 1600 translation of *Maison Rustique* also indicates a separate garden for flowers – but as has been observed on many occasions, this representation of French practice did not necessarily reflect contemporary English practice, nor did it intend to. But even in this case, the author is still at pains to justify the place of the pleasure or flower garden within the country farm: one of its main purposes being to provide a place of recreation and solace for 'the chiefe Lord'.<sup>27</sup> He then goes on to describe the flowers which should be planted in this garden. There should be two beds – one for flowers to make nosegays and garlands and a second for other 'herbes of good smell', not necessarily suitable for nosegays, but instead maybe used for cutting, strewing on the floor or scenting rooms. There is no mention at all of the ornamental or decorative beauty of the flowers, and interestingly it is recommended that this garden be set right next to the kitchen garden. Similarly, although he makes no mention of this in his main work *A New Orchard and Garden*, where he includes a single (short) paragraph recommending the planting of flowers in the orchard, William Lawson

---

<sup>27</sup> Richard Surfleet, *Maison Rustique, or the Countrie Farme* (London, 1600), p. 300

does refer to two gardens, a kitchen garden for vegetables and a ‘summer’ garden of flowering herbs, in the companion volume, *The Country-Houswives Garden*. Again, he appears to be recommending this separation for practical purposes only, suggesting that although they are all ultimately destined for use in the house, it is sensible to keep the vegetables separate from the herbs as the Kitchen garden ‘must yeeld daily roots’ and will therefore ‘suffer deformity’ whereas the plants in the permanent bed of herbs can be left undisturbed or simply cut for use.<sup>28</sup> Once again, what Lawson is definitely *not* talking about is a separate area just for pleasure.

But Parkinson specifically states that, in an ideal world, the flower garden will be separated from the kitchen garden, and should be positioned so that the house is built to the north side of the garden, providing the garden with both shelter and the full benefit of the sun. The fairest rooms of the house will look out into the garden, so that ‘besides the benefit of shelter it shall have from them [...] shall have reciprocally the beautiful prospect into it, and have both sight and sent of whatsoever is excellent [...] which is one of the greatest pleasures a garden can yeeld his Master’.<sup>29</sup> And this, Parkinson appears to be endorsing, is reason enough to fill this garden with beautiful flowers. On the other hand, the kitchen, or herb garden, as he calls it, should be positioned on the other side of the house, not least because the scents arising from cabbages and onions are ‘scarce well pleasing to perfume the lodgings of any house’, but, as Lawson has also pointed out, they are very difficult to keep looking neat, because crops are continually being removed from them for use in the kitchen.<sup>30</sup>

---

<sup>28</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, pp. 79-80[100-101]

<sup>29</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 1

<sup>30</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 461; Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, p. 79[100]

However, Parkinson, ever practical and perhaps with an eye to broadening the appeal of his book to a wider audience, recognises that not everyone will be in a position to do this and instead ‘must make a vertue of necessity [...] by making their profit their chiefest pleasure, and making one place serve for all uses’.<sup>31</sup> This bluntly reminds us once again of the utilitarian nature of most people’s gardens, a fact fully acknowledged by Parkinson. He does not for one moment suggest replacing kitchen herbs and vegetables with ornamental flowers, he is merely recommending them as a desirable addition for those who are in a position to be able to indulge in this luxury – for luxury it is, ornamental flowers producing no ‘profit’. Although the ‘Ordering of the Garden of Pleasure’ makes up by far the greatest part of this book – 460 pages out of a total of 612 - it is only one part. Parkinson includes sections on the kitchen garden and the orchard, because these were still essential elements of the garden.<sup>32</sup>

The reason that Parkinson does not feel the necessity to go into great detail about the kitchen garden here is because ‘I thinke there are but few but eyther know it already, or conceive it sufficiently in their minds’. Furthermore, it is not the purpose of this book: ‘this worke permitteth not that libertie’.<sup>33</sup> The purpose of this book is to offer new information about a new kind of gardening, and his target audience does appear to be those who are in a position to indulge in this, ‘the better sort of Gentry of the Land’. Although he constantly and consistently qualifies much of his advice to include ‘all men’, he also makes many

---

<sup>31</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 461

<sup>32</sup> In the early 1660s, the French garden designer André Mollet, in the English translation of his best-seller *Le Jardin de Plaisir* (Stockholm, 1651; English translation prepared by Mollet before his death in 1665) still recognised the necessity of incorporating a place for the kitchen garden within the whole, but now recommends that this ‘deformity may be hid by high Palissado’s; for we do not allow that the Garden of Pleasure should admit of common Herbes’: André Mollet, *The Garden of Pleasure* (London, 1670; facsimile edn., *Le Jardin de Plaisir = Der Lust Gartten = The Garden of Pleasure*, Uppsala, Sweden: Gyllene Snittet, 2007), p. 4. By the eighteenth century, the kitchen garden had been completely removed from the house and was walled.

<sup>33</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 461

references to Gentlemen, Gentlewomen and to gentry tastes and of course, the book is dedicated to Queen Henrietta Maria, who it is reasonable to assume that he knew personally. His appointment as Royal Botanist certainly allows for this possibility. As we have seen, the seventeenth century saw the gradual emergence of a new ideology, accepting the pursuit of luxury goods as a valid object of human endeavour and it is within this context that we have to place John Parkinson and his *Paradisi in Sole*.<sup>34</sup> He recommends plants and flowers as objects of beauty and delight for no other reason than that they are pleasurable and he is the first garden writer to advocate gardens as places to display beautiful flowers. He offers this advice without apology – in the same way that the consumption of luxury goods was becoming accepted, so too was the display of rare and costly plants in the garden. It has been discussed earlier and at length that the cultivation of exotic fruits in the garden was an outward and visible sign of the wealth and status of the owner. But even this could still be viewed as ‘profit’ – either as foodstuff for the household, to meet hospitality obligations or as gifts which would have been reciprocated in kind or favour. It would seem however, that by the time Parkinson published this book in 1629, ornamental flowers, arguably even more of a luxury than exotic fruit as they have no use or profit at all, were becoming the new status symbol of the rising gentry class.

At the same time, Parkinson’s book is intensely practical and is perhaps also aimed at gardeners such as himself – we certainly know that John Tradescant, John Evelyn, Thomas Hanmer and the keen Yorkshire gardener Sir John Reresby all possessed their own annotated copies,<sup>35</sup> but again it is unlikely that ‘all men’ would have been able to afford to

---

<sup>34</sup>Thomas, *The Ends of Life*, p. 140

<sup>35</sup> A copy of Parkinson’s book annotated by John Tradescant is held in the Bodleian Library; a copy annotated by John Evelyn is held in the British Library; Thomas Hanmer refers to it in his *Garden Book* (p. 32); John Reresby’s plant list is cross-referenced to pages in *Paradisi in Sole*.

buy this large and lavishly illustrated volume. So although this is a new book for a new kind of gardener, it, and the kind of garden it describes, are still for the privileged few rather than the many.

In Parkinson then we have identified a new approach to both garden writing and gardening. It is possible to see how new attitudes towards such diverse notions as science, consumption and pleasure are reflected in contemporary gardening practice and how there is a new emphasis on the beauty of plants and the garden of pleasure. Now we must look to other contemporary documentary evidence to see if and how this backs up these ideas.

It has already been noted that, for a number of possible reasons, documentary sources relating to Elizabethan gardens show a particular paucity of information about flowers in the garden. Available evidence for the early seventeenth century continues to offer only occasional specific references to flowers, but although rare, they do offer insight into the growing interest in ornamental flowers for the garden. There are for instance a number of references to the gardens at the home of Sir Henry Fanshaw at Ware Park in Hertfordshire. The much-travelled diplomat and writer Sir Henry Wotton observes in his *Elements of Architecture* (1624) that despite the many delightful gardens he has seen on the continent, which ‘have much more benefite of Sunne than wee’:

yet have I seene in our *owne*, a delicate and diligent *curiositie*, surely without *parallel* amongh foreign *Nations*: Namely in the Garden of Sir *Henry Fanshaw*, at his seat in *Ware-Parke*, where I wel remember, he did so precisely examine the *tinctures*, and *seasons* of his *flowers*, that in their *setting* [...] like a piece not of *Nature*, but of *Arte*.<sup>36</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> Henry Wotton, from *The Elements of Architecture* (1624) in *The Genius of the Place*, ed. by Hunt and Ellis, pp. 48-49

This description is reminiscent of Parkinson's reference to planting different coloured tulips so that they resemble a tapestry or painting, and the letter writer and court commentator John Chamberlain agrees that at Ware Park you shall 'see as fresh and flourishing a garden (I thincke) as England affoordes'.<sup>37</sup> In her memoirs addressed to her only son and written in 1676, Ann Lady Fanshaw, Sir Henry's daughter-in-law, writes of the praise of his grandfather's garden at Ware Park 'none excelling it in flowers, physic-herbs, and fruit, in which things he did greatly delight'.<sup>38</sup> Nevertheless, it would seem that as this garden was clearly so worthy of comment, it probably represented the exception rather than the rule. This information doesn't really tell us much at all beyond the fact that Henry Fanshawe had a much-admired flower garden.

Roy Strong points to evidence provided by a painting of Newburgh Priory in Yorkshire, which he dates to the late seventeenth century, as examples of 'two pre-Civil War flower gardens'. This was the seat of the Belasyse family and the painting has been dated to around the end of the seventeenth century. It shows the South front of the house, with two gardens laid out in quite different styles and the colours used in the painting would indeed appear to depict them as flower gardens.<sup>39</sup> Despite the dating of the painting, Strong identifies these two gardens as a Jacobean and a Caroline garden. However, given that he goes on to suggest that the garden in the foreground of the picture is 'a quite unique record' of this type of garden and that the borders around the grass plats shown in the garden nearest to the house have been converted to the more modern style to hold displays of flowers, and given also the lack of any corroborating evidence, the certainty of this

---

<sup>37</sup> Norman McClure, ed., *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, 2 vols (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1939), 1, p. 227

<sup>38</sup> *The Memoirs of Ann Lady Fanshawe* (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1907), p. 9

<sup>39</sup> Strong, *The Artist and the Garden*, p.149



assertion has to be brought into question and in the end this painting does little more than present the possibility that there were flower gardens at Newburgh Priory in the early seventeenth century.

More useful perhaps are extant plant lists from two other Yorkshire gardens of this time: one compiled by the Reverend Walter Stonehouse 'A Modell of my Garden at Darfield, 1640' and the other, a more recently discovered list contained in the Garden Notebook of Sir John Reresby of Thrybergh, covering the years from 1633-44.<sup>40</sup> Stonehouse's list consists of a catalogue of 450 plants made up in 1640, to which a further 416 were added over the next four years, together with a remarkably detailed scale plan of his 'best garden', which is made up of five geometrically patterned beds, marked with numbers corresponding to the plant lists.<sup>41</sup> Unlike the slightly conjectural evidence above, this clearly is an example of a real ornamental flower garden that can be precisely dated.

Sir John Reresby's list, whilst much of his interest was, in common with other gentry gardeners of this period, in fruit growing, also includes an extensive list of tulip varieties as well as over 400 herbaceous plants growing in his garden. Reresby was a near neighbour of Reverend Stonehouse and had inherited the estate at Thrybergh Hall in Yorkshire on the death of his father in 1628. Evidence for his enthusiasm for gardening begins with the enclosing of orchards and gardens around the Hall with dry stone wall and the commencement of the keeping of his garden notebook in 1633.<sup>42</sup> This document was

---

<sup>40</sup> Gunther, *Early British Botanists*, pp. 348-5; Woudstra and O'Halloran, 'Sir John Reresby's Garden Notebook', pp. 159-192

<sup>41</sup> The plant lists were published in R. T. Gunther, 'The garden of Rev. Walter Stonehouse', *Gardeners' Chronicle*, 15 May 1920.

<sup>42</sup> Woudstra and O'Halloran, 'Sir John Reresby's Garden Notebook', p. 137

continued until 1644, when the outbreak of Civil War led to Sir John's imprisonment and eventual death from fever in 1646. The list reveals his enthusiasm for 'outlandish' plants: as well as the many varieties of tulips already referred to, flowers such as anemones, colchicum, fritillaria and lychnis, to name but a few, are also mentioned. It is a list of plants comparable to John Tradescant's plant list of 1634, Stonehouse's list referred to above and those recorded as growing in Parkinson's garden at Long Acre. Many of the plants listed are cross-referenced to pages in *Paradisi in Sole*. Should we therefore conclude that Sir John Reresby was another contemporary plant enthusiast and his garden somewhat exceptional? It is difficult to know as the garden notebook gives little else away, but what we do have is an interesting comment written by his son in his memoirs some twenty years or so after his father's death, which sheds some light on this question:

My father was exactly curious in his garden, and was of the first that acquainted that part of England (so far north) with the exactness and nicety of those things – not only as to the form or contrivance of the ground, but as to excellency and variety of fruits, flowers, greens, in which he was rather extravagant than curious, for he placed his pleasure not only innocently but pleasantly in it.<sup>43</sup>

As his son would only have been ten years old when Reresby was imprisoned, it seems unlikely that what he writes comes from personal recollection, but rather that his father's garden clearly had a reputation for introducing innovative ideas to this part of England. His son comments on the layout of the garden, about which we know little, but emphasises more his father's extravagant choice and range of plants, as described above. He was clearly both knowledgeable and skilful ('exactly curious'), but also took great pleasure in his garden. There is an implication that whilst he exercised a careful control over the wider estate that when it came to the ornamental flower garden, he was prepared to be more

---

<sup>43</sup> J Cartwright, ed. *The Memoirs of Sir John Reresby of Thrybergh, 1634-1689 written by himself* (London: Longmans, Green & Co, 1875), p. 78

lavish. We have no way of quantifying his ‘extravagance’, but the fact that it was noteworthy must be of significance. It is known that when the elder Sir John took over the estate from his father in 1628 that he was forced to run it on somewhat limited means – alterations to the garden, like those to the Hall, were made on a piecemeal basis, for instance enclosing courtyards that were already flanked by buildings in order perhaps to save on the expense of new walling.<sup>44</sup> As such this provides another example of updating and modernising by way of modifications to existing structures and layouts, rather than of complete rebuilding. However, it does seem that once he has planted his orchards (still a primary concern), Sir John then turns his attention to his passion for flowers and he remained, we are told ‘ever constant to his garden’.<sup>45</sup>

From these examples it is certainly possible to discern an identifiable increase among enthusiasts for the growing of flowers in the garden and once again the commonplace books of Sir John Oglander offer further insight. Unlike his northern compatriots, Sir John doesn’t provide much horticultural information about flower varieties and so on – from the extant manuscripts at least it seems that he did not keep detailed plant lists – but what his writing does offer is other clues about his gardening interests which allow us to understand some of this evidence within a wider context. Sir John’s interest in fruit-growing has already been discussed at length and that he was equally prepared to spend time and money

---

<sup>44</sup> Woudstra and O’Halloran, ‘Sir John Reresby’s Garden Notebook’, pp. 137-139

<sup>45</sup> Cartwright, *Memoirs of Sir John Reresby*, p. 14. After his death, the family moved away to London and his son and heir spent much time travelling on the Continent, only to return to Thrybergh Hall in 1659. By this time, the flower collection would have been long gone through neglect, and as the younger Sir John puts it ‘the form of gardening was so different to what was used at this day, that it was almost as chargeable to me to put the ground into that method and form as to replant it as if it had never been enclosed’. Instead of reviving his father’s reputation and passion for plants by replanting the flower beds, he installed a fountain, a parterre and a grotto in the summerhouse: Cartwright, p. 78 This is a good example of how quickly garden layouts can be transformed. Within a generation the garden is completely altered, highlighting again the need for caution and precision in the dating of gardens.

on other parts of his garden is evident from his description of the garden at Nunwell, quoted in full on page 115 above. In it, he includes a description of what is obviously his flower garden:

An[d] in the Parlour garden, in one knott all sortes of Gilliflowers [,]  
in the other knott all sortes of ffrench fflowes, and Tulippes of all  
sortes [.] Some rootes costs me 10s a Roote.<sup>46</sup>

The 1748 map of Nunwell,<sup>47</sup> as mentioned, indicates quite clearly an ornamental garden immediately in front of the house and it is highly probable that this was the location of Sir John's 'Parlour garden'.<sup>48</sup> According to his description, this garden was divided into two areas, or knots as he refers to them: one knot was for gilliflowers – traditional English flowers, and the other reserved for more exotic species – specifically all sorts of French flowers and tulips. Again, this arrangement is just as recommended by Parkinson, who suggests that because their horticultural requirements are different, the two types of plants should be kept in separate beds for ease of maintenance. Whether Sir John Oglander ever met John Parkinson, or even read his book is unknown, but it is interesting that they were apparently advocating and carrying out similar gardening practices in different parts of the country at the same time. Sir John's parlour garden does seem to match up to Parkinson's ideal of the garden of pleasure – a garden of flowers in full prospect of the main rooms of

---

<sup>46</sup> IOWRO, OG/AA/29, fol. 27<sup>v</sup>

<sup>47</sup> **Figure 28**, p. 121 above

<sup>48</sup> It is difficult to find any precise definition for what exactly is meant by a 'parlour' garden, but in this case we can see that it is an area of the garden close to the house, which can be easily reached or at least viewed from the parlour windows – just, in fact, as described by John Parkinson who recommended that the garden of flowers 'be in the sight and full prospect of all the chief and choicest rooms of the house': *Paradisi*, p. 461. The account books of Sir Peter Temple at Stowe for 1625-6 mention a 'parler garden' a number of times: it contains gilliflowers and other herbs, as well as four knots that appear to require frequent clipping and it is located under the 'parler windowe'; his father, Sir Thomas Temple, also refers to his new garden at Burton Dassett as the 'Parlour gardine'. This too is to be planted with flowers and is situated immediately outside the parlour windows – there are instructions to plant over and around the 'South chamber window of the Parler': HL, Temple MSS, STT452, STT2279, STT2288. The defining features would therefore seem to be its location and the fact that it is an area separated from the rest of garden, set aside purely for ornamental flowers.

the house – and the flowers with which Sir John chooses to stock his garden follow the current fashion for exotic, foreign and unusual plants.

And these plants were costly items: he mentions that some cost him 10 shillings a root, a not inconsiderable sum which can be contextualised by looking at contemporary references in his account books and noting for instance that 200 cabbage plants could be had for 1s, an estate labourer was paid 9s a week and a barrel of figs was purchased for 8s.<sup>49</sup>

Elsewhere, we learn from John Chamberlain again that in 1609 Sir Henry Fanshawe had ‘fowre or five flowers from Sir Rafe Winwood that cost twelve pound’.<sup>50</sup> Clearly to spend large sums of money on flowers was not unheard of and Sir John himself writes that he has been ‘so foolish as to bestowe more moneyes then a wise man would have in fflowers for the Garden’.<sup>51</sup> It is, as already noted above, difficult to quantify such remarks, but throughout his writing Sir John does display a careful, if not parsimonious, attitude to his financial affairs: ‘If I spend as mutch this year as I did the last, I shall be like a man in a storm not well knowinge what course to take’ he notes in his end of year accounts for 1623, and things do not appear to have improved much by 1632 when he notes again: ‘I must spend lesse otherwayes I shall be undone’.<sup>52</sup> On the other hand, it is also worth noting that despite these obvious concerns over expenditure, Sir John was not averse to spending money on other extravagances: on August 4th 1624 a ship from the Barbary came into port on the Isle of Wight and Sir John went aboard to buy tobacco, sugar, silk stockings and dates for which he paid the princely total of £3 13s.<sup>53</sup> Clearly, Sir John was taken by all sorts of exotic goods from abroad, not necessarily just flowers, and that he considers that

---

<sup>49</sup> IOWRO, OG/AA/27, fols 48-9

<sup>50</sup> McClure, *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, 1, p. 290

<sup>51</sup> IOWRO, OG/AA/29, fol. 25

<sup>52</sup> IOWRO, OG/AA/29, fol. 6

<sup>53</sup> IOWRO, OG/AA/26

he has spent more than he should on garden plants may be an indication not simply of his love of flowers but also the degree of importance he attaches to such displays of luxury and wealth.

It is significant too that even though Sir John does not name the varieties of flowers in his garden, what he does consider worthy of note is that they were ‘french flowers’. Although common and native garden flowers would have been available in England, as we have seen, unusual and therefore more desirable plants were being imported from all over the world, but particularly from the near Continent: Holland, Flanders and France. We know that in 1610 John Tradescant was dispatched to the Continent to buy plants to stock the newly laid-out gardens at Hatfield House.<sup>54</sup> Later in the century, Thomas Hanmer’s extensive lists of plants and prices include tulips, ranunculas, iris and anemones all obtained from the leading Paris nurseryman Pierre Moryn, as well as anemones and tulips from another French nurseryman, Monsieur Picot. Hanmer also notes that roots and bulbs were more expensive in France than in England but this doesn’t stop him buying them from there.<sup>55</sup> It may be that there was an implied prestige in buying plants from France and this could explain why, although he gives no further details about his plant purchases, Sir John mentions that they were French - clearly for him, this was a note-worthy attribute.<sup>56</sup> Similar prestige applied to tulips imported from Holland and the Englishman’s passion for tulips in an ever increasing number of varieties has been well-documented.<sup>57</sup> Since John

---

<sup>54</sup> Prudence Leith-Ross, *The John Tradescants: Gardeners to the Rose and Lily Queen* (London: Peter Owen, 1984), p. 29

<sup>55</sup> NLW, Bettisfield 1663

<sup>56</sup> The continent, and particularly France, was seen as a primary source of what was luxurious, stylish and fashionable by early 17th century – see for instance Linda Peck, *Consuming Splendor*, p. 13; Bryson, *From Courtesy to Civility*, pp. 75-76.

<sup>57</sup> See for instance Anna Pavord, *The Tulip* (London: Bloomsbury, 2000); Simon Sharma, *The Embarrassment of Riches* (London: Fontana, 1991)

Gerard had described just fourteen varieties of tulip in his *Herball* published in 1597, the market for tulips had grown stupendously. In 1629, John Parkinson wrote at length on well over a hundred varieties of tulip, claiming that ‘there is no Lady or Gentlewoman of any worth that is not [...] delighted with these flowers’.<sup>58</sup> That Sir John Oglander had ‘Tulippes of all sortes’ as well as French flowers in his garden would indicate that he too considered himself a gentleman of worth and that displaying these flowers in his garden was an outward and visible sign of this.

By contrast, the garden that was created by Sir Thomas Temple and Richard the Gardiner at Sir Thomas’ Warwickshire home in Burton Dassett tells a different story. There is nothing at all ostentatious about this little garden although it is, as should be noted, a flower garden. Like Sir John Reresby’s, and perhaps for the same reasons, the garden is enclosed using existing walls and buildings. It is laid out conventionally and planted with roses, violets, gilliflowers, primroses and honeysuckles, all native plants described by Parkinson as ‘English flowers’. There is no sign here of Oglander’s passion for exotic plants from France or elsewhere. It is probably significant that by this time, Sir Thomas was an old man – he was 71 when he died in 1636 - and that he was feeling his age comes through strongly in his letters. He writes of his age as ‘a sickness of itself’ and he complains more than once about a fall which has left him lame. A number of his letters to his servant Harry Rose begin with words to the effect that he is writing this down before he forgets, and on one occasion he asks for a copy of the letter back so that he can remember what he has told him! Somewhat poignantly, one of his last letters to Rose is to ask him to order a new pair of boots, but they need to be a little longer and wider than previously ‘for that I am

---

<sup>58</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 9

continues troubled with cornes & weare alwaies or for the most parte 2 paires of wollen stockinges in regard of cramps & my hip bone put out of joynte'.<sup>59</sup> Nevertheless, despite these ailments, advancing age and retirement from public life brought with it the time and leisure to indulge in his enthusiasm for his little garden at Dassett. And although Sir Thomas was clearly interested in experimenting with different horticultural techniques to establish vine cuttings or bayslips for instance, it is difficult to detect in him any particular aspirations for the fashionable or new. There is little evidence either that he was concerned with showing off his garden. Rather, it seems that he was simply displaying a desire for a fragrant and pleasant place, filled with flowers and plants that he liked - and knew - in which to while away the remainder of his days.

From the above evidence then, we are given various glimpses into a number of 'gardens of pleasant flowers' of the early seventeenth century. Whilst some, as in the case of Sir John Reresby, give us detailed information about plants in the garden, others, as in the cases of Sir John Oglander and Sir Thomas Temple, are able, because of the more personalised nature of the evidence, to offer deeper insight into these contemporaneous gardens of pleasure.

The fact is however that evidence remains sparse and is rooted in particularity. We have noted before and examined evidence for the huge number of variable factors involved in creating a garden – space, cost, purpose, local conditions, as well as questions of taste and personal likes and dislikes. In addition, those that have left us records of their gardens have not necessarily chosen to concentrate on the same aspects of it, so at best, records are

---

<sup>59</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2287, STT2284, STT2301



subjective and incomplete and attempting to form a general picture of the place of flowers in the English garden based on rare and specific examples remains problematic.

Similar difficulties arise in attempting to trace the history and place of knot gardens in the early modern period. The lack of visual evidence and problems in defining what exactly was meant by a ‘knot’ were discussed in Chapter 2 and continued into the seventeenth century. These difficulties, together with a reappraisal of some of the evidence for the knot garden in early modern England are discussed in Appendix 3. Here, discussion will be confined to actual documentary evidence that can be gleaned from contemporary sources.

As in the sixteenth century, there is no lack of evidence that knot gardens, whatever they may have looked like, continued to be laid out in the gardens of the gentry well into the seventeenth century. In June 1625, Henry the Gardener at Stow spends three days ‘Clypping the quarter hedge of the Parler Garden’ and a further three days ‘cutting out of the knottes’ there. He then passes another day ‘clipping the 2 knottes in the Parler garden’. For these seven days work he receives 3s 6d.<sup>60</sup> Earlier in this chapter, we noted John Parkinson’s lengthy discussion on the various contemporary fashions in materials used to border knots, although it is significant that he offers no advice on how to actually lay out a knot, which is curious given the precise detail he enters into on so many other matters.<sup>61</sup> As has been discussed at length elsewhere, Sir John Oglander writes in 1633 of two knots in his garden at Nunwell house, one filled with ‘all sortes of Gilliflowers’, the other with ‘all sortes of ffrench fflowes, and Tulips of all sortes’.<sup>62</sup> Although he doesn’t refer to them as

---

<sup>60</sup> HL, Temple MSS, ST452, p. 75

<sup>61</sup> Possible reasons as to why this might be are discussed in Appendix 3.

<sup>62</sup> OG/AA/29, p. 27<sup>v</sup>

such, the new garden laid out by Sir Thomas Temple at Burton Dassett in the 1630s contained two very simple knots, or quarters, reminiscent of the simple geometric compartments identified as a feature of sixteenth-century gardens.<sup>63</sup> In 1643, a man is paid 1s a day for ‘cutting turfe’ at the Pelham estate in Sussex, this relatively high rate of pay perhaps indicating that this was a skilled task. In the late 1650s, Sir Thomas Hanmer writing from his home in Flintshire in North Wales records a change in the layout of ‘knotts or quarters’ which are now much different from his father’s time. They are no longer hedged with privet, rosemary or other tall herbs, but instead are laid open, the borders only upheld with low coloured boards, stone or tile.<sup>64</sup> It would seem then that far from passing out of fashion as has been suggested by Roy Strong,<sup>65</sup> knots, in whatever form, clearly remained an important element of rural gentry gardens throughout this period. Regrettably however, we are still left with little idea of how these gardens actually looked. There are some clues, including illustrations included in contemporary literature and occasional depictions of gardens in paintings and on maps and plans, but these can often be misleading, because as is argued in the Appendix, they are not necessarily, for a number of reasons which are explored, representative of the reality on the ground.

One further element of the early seventeenth-century garden that remains to be considered is the changing place of ornamentation – or hard landscaping as we might call it today – in the gardens of the gentry. It has been noted that ornament in the Elizabethan gentleman’s garden tended to be functional: fountains conveyed vital water to the garden, seats and

---

<sup>63</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2347 and **Figure 29**, p. 125 above

<sup>64</sup> NLW, Bettisfield 1667. These are the same kind of materials that were described by John Parkinson in 1629, an indication perhaps of how long it took new fashions to reach the Welsh border from London.

<sup>65</sup> Strong, *The Renaissance Garden in England*, p. 40; *The Artist and the Garden*, p. 34

arbours provided rest and shade, pigeon-houses and fish-ponds supplied food for the household and as we move into the seventeenth century, these considerations remain. John Parkinson has little to say about ornament in the garden, but echoes Lawson in mentioning fountains for the purpose of watering the garden and also arbours ‘to serve both for shadow and for rest after walking’.<sup>66</sup> However, there does seem to be some evidence that ornament for ornaments’ sake was becoming, like the planting of beautiful flowers, an increasingly notable feature of gentry gardens.

Particularly illuminating evidence in this regard is found contained within a set of accounts relating to the rebuilding and remodelling of Trentham Hall in Staffordshire during the 1630s under the direction of Sir Richard Leveson. Although Leveson had inherited the title to Trentham Hall from his father’s cousin and namesake, Vice-Admiral Sir Richard Leveson following his death in 1605, he did not actually take up residence there until 1627 and it was only after this time that the rebuilding work on the family’s Staffordshire seat began.<sup>67</sup> The main documentary evidence comprises a single account book, entitled ‘Moneyes dysbersed about the building at Trentham, 1633-38’ which details the weekly expenditure for the entire five year period and although most of the entries refer to work on the house, information is also provided regarding the immense amount of work involved in creating the structural elements of a fashionable gentry garden.<sup>68</sup> This evidence reveals nothing of Sir Richard’s feelings about his garden, his likes and dislikes or his reasons for rebuilding the garden and it tells us very little about anything that was planted in the

---

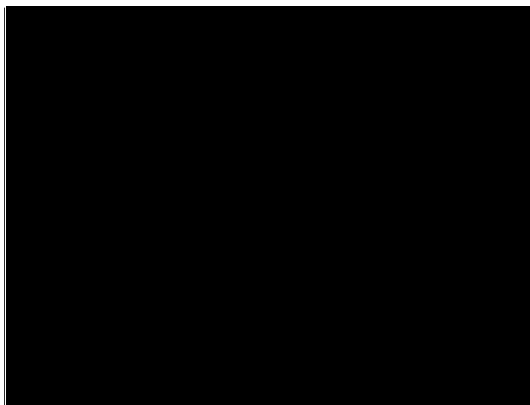
<sup>66</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 5

<sup>67</sup> Thrush & Ferris, *The House of Commons, 1604-1629*, pp. 107-8. The background to and development of Trentham Hall during this period are discussed in an article by Richard Wisker, ‘The First Trentham Hall’, *Staffordshire History*, 24 (1996), 6-14.

<sup>68</sup> SRO, D593/R/1/2. All quotes referring to the Trentham Accounts are from this document, unless otherwise stated.

garden. However, what it does do is to provide an unusually detailed and complete account of construction work carried out on the garden, making it possible to trace its development over three years from what was essentially a building site, with much hewing of stone and digging of foundations, to the creation of an established garden maintained by gardeners and a bevy of weeding women. It also offers some insight into the style of garden that was created.

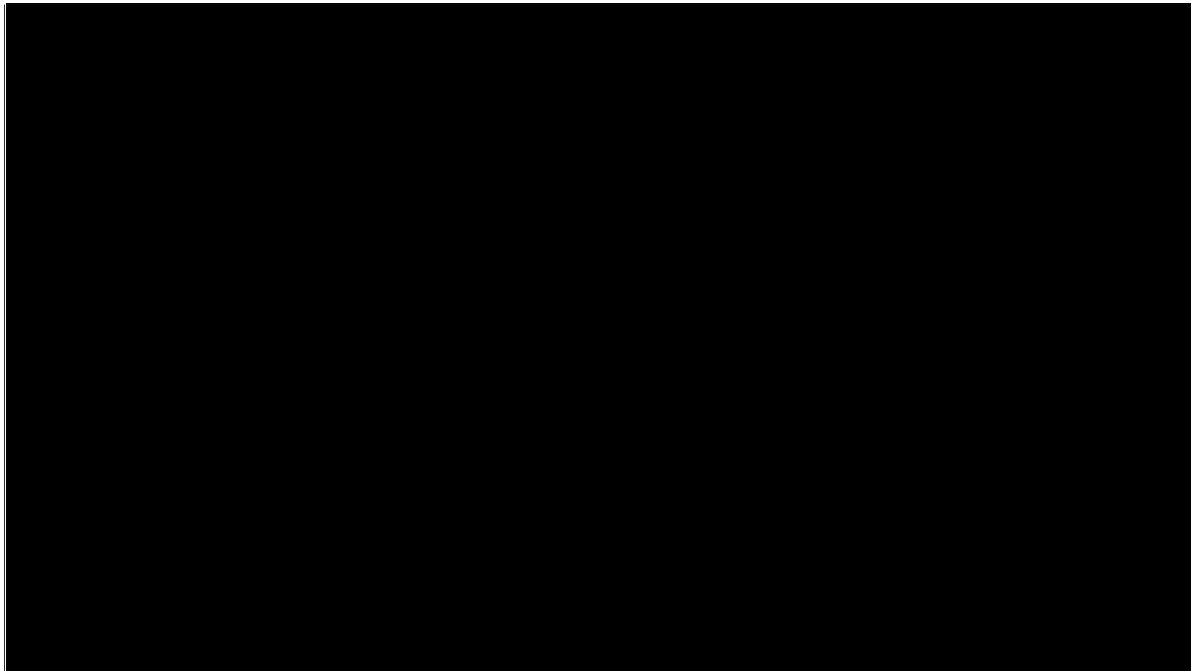
Supporting the evidence from these accounts, two contemporary engravings in Robert Plot's *Natural History of Staffordshire* show Trentham Hall after its face lift in the 1630s.<sup>69</sup> Although not published until 1686, we can be quite sure that these show the newly renovated house and garden, because in the first engraving the names of both Richard Leveson (RICHARDUS) as well as that of King Charles the First (CAROLO BRITANIAE REGE) are clearly depicted along the top of the stone wall lining the court that leads to the main entrance of the house and in the second, it is possible to make out the rest of his name (LEVESON) along the front wall.



**Figure 35 Detail from engraving of Trentham Hall  
by Michael Burghers**  
from Robert Plot, *The Natural History of Staffordshire*, 1686

---

<sup>69</sup> Robert Plot, *The Natural History of Staffordshire* (Oxford, 1686). The engravings contained within this volume were executed by the Dutch engraver, Michael Burghers: *Bryan's Dictionary of Painters and Engravers*, 5 vols (4<sup>th</sup> edn revised by George Williamson, London: Bell, 1903, ), 1, p. 216



**Figure 36 Engraving of Trentham Hall by Michael Burghers**  
from Robert Plot, *The Natural History of Staffordshire*, 1686

(The carved letters referred to above can be seen on the original drawing along the top of the wall next to the entrance.)

It is interesting to note from the building accounts for 1633 that two payments are made on the 12th October, one to Thomas Griswell and his son and another to John Parson for ‘hewing letters for the cort wall’ at 1s 6d per day.

It is clear that most of the initial work on the garden was structural. It is also clear that there was already a garden on this site and that the work done at this time was a remodelling of an existing structure. So for example on 30th March 1633, Richard Moreton and Thomas Greatbatch were digging the foundations for a new garden wall, while at the same time Richard Moare was pulling down an already existing garden wall in order to remove ‘2 doores and put them up in the south side of the garden’; John Pearson spent four days ‘taking downe a window into the garden’ and Goodyeare Holt took up part

of the wall to make a seat. There are many such examples of this judicious reuse of materials.

The references to windows and doors in gardens may at first sight seem somewhat surprising, but there are other similar references to them in contemporary household records. For instance, the accounts of Sir Thomas Aubrey at his home in South Wales lists a payment ‘unto the glayser for mending the orchard windows’, a painter at Penshurst colours ‘all the dores about the gardens’ and elsewhere in the Trentham accounts there are payments recorded to Richard Taylor for ‘making an arch of Iron for the garden window’ and to Thomas Loversage for ‘maintayning the windows at Trentham and Lilleshall & glazing 12 foote in your garden with old glasse & mortering there’.<sup>70</sup> The ‘paled gardine dore’ in Thomas Temple’s garden has already been mentioned,<sup>71</sup> and there are further references to garden doors at Trentham: ‘for a doore way in the south side of the garden’, ‘for making a portall door into the kitchen garden’, ‘work over the garden doore in the Cort wall next the garden’, all of which reminds us that in the sixteenth century large gardens were divided into compartments, fenced with high walls or hedges and it becomes clear that this practice continued well into the seventeenth century. There was evidence of these divisions in the gardens at Nunwell, although no detail of their construction and at Trentham we have an example of a new garden still retaining this basic structure. Other examples can be seen depicted in contemporary drawings and paintings, such as the one by an unknown artist of the house and gardens at Llanerch in Denbighshire.<sup>72</sup> In this painting of gardens laid out in the mid-seventeenth century, we can see that as well as enclosing the

---

<sup>70</sup> Bowen, *Household Accounts of Sir Thomas Aubrey*, p. 100; HMC, *De L’Isle MSS*, III, p. 374; SRO, D593/R/1/2

<sup>71</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2347

<sup>72</sup> See **Figure 3**, p. 14 above

outer boundaries of the garden, walls and hedges also enclosed the various compartments, and along these divisions can be seen doors and windows. The purpose of doors is obvious, but the presence of windows is slightly more difficult to define. It is possible that they were simply provided for decorative purposes, as shown here in the wall that faces the fountain or they may have been placed in order to provide a view out of the garden as it seems that the walls were quite high. If the latter was the case, than a simple ‘viewing’ hole in the wall would have negated the protection against the weather afforded by the walls, so presumably they were glazed in order to maintain this benefit.

The account books indicate a number of compartments at Trentham, with references to ‘Sir Richard’s garden’, ‘my ladies garden’, a kitchen garden and an orchard, as well as a magnificent fountain and a high mount, all of which are likely to have been enclosed in their own separate areas. Between the compartments would have been wide gravel walks, and again ‘the walke in the south range of the house’ is mentioned in the account books. Although it is not particularly detailed, this division of the garden into compartments with dividing walls and walks is clearly depicted in the engraving of Trentham Hall above.<sup>73</sup> It is also possible to discern steps, gates and doors into and out of the various compartments of the garden.<sup>74</sup>

Other structural features mentioned in the accounts included seats, which were built into garden walls: Holt and Bellamie are paid ‘for fynishing the seate in the garden wall’ and

---

<sup>73</sup> See **Figure 36**, p. 182 above.

<sup>74</sup> It is of course impossible to know how accurate a depiction these engravings of Trentham were, but amongst the series of illustrations of gentry houses in Staffordshire included in Plot’s overview, most focus only on the building with only a few including the garden. The fact that Plot included two views of Trentham in his *History*, one specifically showing the layout of the garden would indicate that he (or the engraver Michael Burghers) considered it worthy of note and it would be fair to assume that the illustration, even if not particularly detailed, offers at least an impression of the garden created at Trentham Hall.

later for making an arch and a seat in my ladies garden, with 8½ feet of skew (specially shaped stones for creating curves) for the inside of the seat. Two seats were made in the wall of Sir Richard's garden. These could well have been quite elaborate affairs – such as the one depicted in the painting of Llanerch, or possibly resembling an extant seat which can still be seen at Edington Priory in Wiltshire, dating from about 1600.<sup>75</sup> Again, there is an indication of seats in the engraving of Trentham Hall, but no detail. Elsewhere, as in the case of Robert Sydney at Penshurst, there is mention of the 'colloring of the seates in the garden' at Halland House.<sup>76</sup>

Steps were another feature of larger gardens – rather than a sloping garden, each compartment was levelled, with connecting steps in between, to create terraces. Again, this is illustrated in the painting of Llanerch, the shape of the walls in particular indicating the degree of slope on which this garden was built, although each compartment appears flat and level. At Trentham, the account book indicates that in October 1633 Wm Gervace is paid 8s for six days work 'hewing stone for the to[e]rrice in the garden'; the following February Richard [?Amphlud] was similarly paid for 'hewing 52 steps for the coming out of the garden into the house' and William Hunt was paid a further 2s 2d for 'getting 52 foote of steppes for the stayres out of the house and into the garden'. A few weeks later, James Clayton receives 8s for 'setting the steares [...] out of the lobbie into the garden'. This was clearly a major operation involving a number of workers and these steps are clearly shown on the drawing, coming from the house into the garden containing the fountain. Later in the year, William Hunt was once again fetching '195 foote of flagge and steppes for the high mount in the garden' and Timothy Addams is paid for two days work

---

<sup>75</sup> Henderson, *Tudor House and Garden*, p. 156

<sup>76</sup> BL, Pelham, Add. 33145, fol. 68



‘setting the steares into the garden’. At the same time, away in Sussex, Sir Thomas Pelham paid a total of 15s 6*d* to ‘Merick for laying 46 foot of stone & a halfe foot for staes in the great garden at 4*d* per foot’. There is no further detail, but it is clear that Sir Thomas was similarly engaged in the construction of a large garden, and that steps and terraces were one of its features.

By the summer of 1634, the basic structure of the garden at Trentham appears to have been laid – walls had been built, doors and windows in the garden installed, arches and seats completed, steps and terraces constructed. On the 7th November of that year, work began on the water works which were clearly a major part of the overall project: the final entry in the account book is a summary of ‘the whole charge of all the worke for the building of the mannor house at Trentham’ and it includes a reference to the conveyance of water to all the ‘houses of office’ which presumably were added as part of the rebuilding programme.<sup>77</sup> Of particular interest here is that at the same time, for obvious reasons, work also began on the construction of a fountain in the garden which was to continue for almost a year. The final payment for ‘paynting the fountaine’ was made on September 12th 1635, ten months after the work had begun in November of the previous year.

This whole project must have been a major feat of construction: specific entries in the account books such as ‘to Thomas Greatbatch four days digging in the trench for water’; ‘to Rowley 6 days stopping water in the trenches and upper poole’; ‘to John Bradwell 4 dayes sawing a trough to bring water out of the pool’ and many similar entries for other men ‘at the same work’ all bear witness to the enormity of this project. Following the

---

<sup>77</sup> SRO, D593/R/1/2. The total amounted to £6,165 17s 6*d*.

initial construction of the water courses to the house from the upper pool, work then continued on the construction of the fountain. Four people, 'Mr Bellamie and his man' and 'Thomas Griswell and his boy' worked six days a week 'at the fountaine' every week for nine months, although the precise nature of their work is unrecorded. However, there are other more specific entries. On 25th April 1635, William Vawghan was dispatched to the quarry 'to get up some great white stone for the fountain'. In June, Goodyear Holt spent eight days laying stone foundations for the fountain and a plumber was brought in for '5 dayes casting pipes for the fountaine'. Finally, a painter arrived on 15th August who spent the next five weeks putting the finishing touches to the fountain. As well as payments for his labour, at the normal rate of 1s 4d per day, he was also reimbursed for two payments for 'colors for the fountayne': on 12th September he received the substantial sum of 10s 2d and two weeks later on 26th September, he received a further 8s. There are no details as to the colours used, but the finished construction must have been a spectacular sight.<sup>78</sup>

Unfortunately, the illustrations of Trentham don't give much away about how the fountain looked, but a glance at the work of the contemporary architect Inigo Jones, whilst his designs were clearly at the pinnacle of such work, give an idea at least of the kind of intricate and ornate fountains that were fashionable at this time. What is interesting is that fountains as elaborate as these were clearly more than just functional objects in the garden; rather they were about ornament, ostentation and show.

---

<sup>78</sup> It is quite difficult now to imagine the use of paint and colour on structures such as this because of course, none now remains, but we do know for instance that the fountains and conduits along the processional route through London of the new Queen Elizabeth were freshly repainted for the occasion of her 'Royal Entry' and as noted above in the case of the garden doors and seats at Penshurst, the use of paint and colour seems to have been a common practice in fashionable gardens which continued into the seventeenth century: Germaine Warkentin, *The Queen's Majesty's Passage and related documents* (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, University of Toronto, 2004), p. 108



**Figure 37 Inigo Jones' drawing of a fountain for Somerset House**  
from John Harris and Gordon Higgot, *Inigo Jones: Complete Architectural Drawings* (London: Philip Wilson, 1989) p. 215

Other garden ornament mentioned in the Trentham accounts and elsewhere included statues which of course have no practical purpose whatsoever. We know little about the statue at Trentham except that Mr Hall, his two sons and his man were each paid for five days work polishing it. This does not tell us much, but it must have been a fairly substantial feature to require so much work. Elsewhere, on 3 March 1627, Sir Thomas Aubrey of Llantrithyd paid 30s to 'the workman that made the statues' and the Oglander papers reveal a single payment of £2 on 29 April 1642 to 'Crocker for the making of the statue' at Nunwell.<sup>79</sup> This is the only ornament mentioned in this detailed description of the garden, but it is interesting that by this time, even the most rural of gentry gardens were beginning to incorporate such decorative features.<sup>80</sup>

---

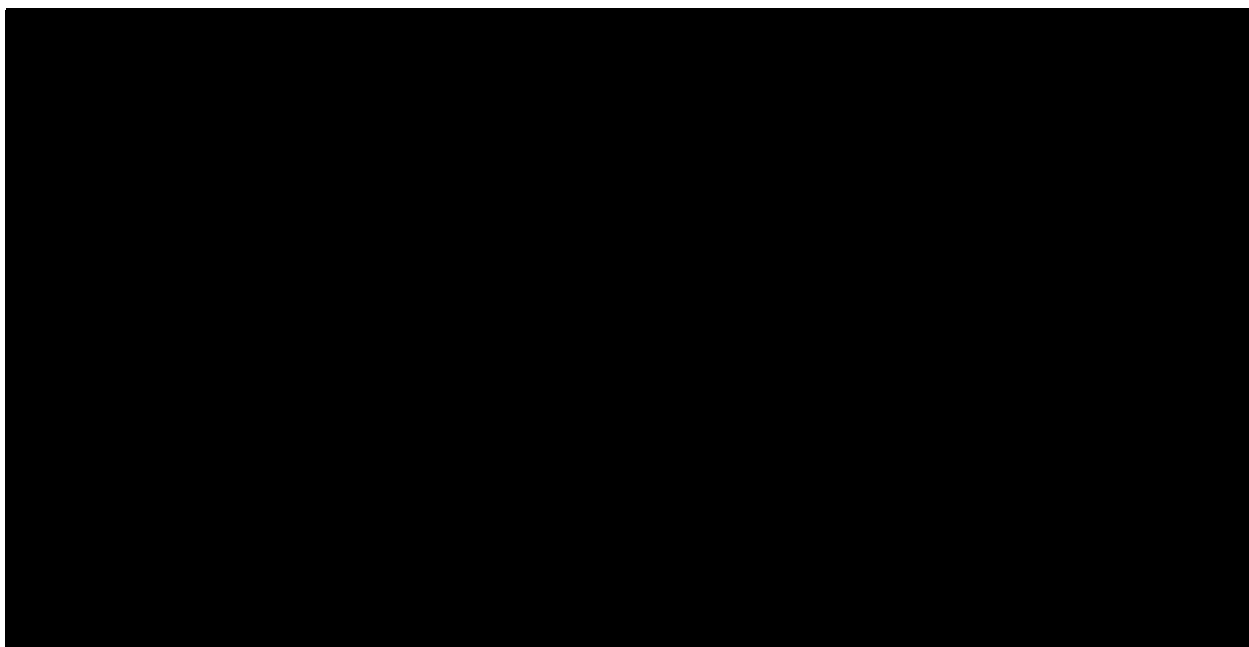
<sup>79</sup> Bowen, *Household Accounts of Sir Thomas Aubrey*, p. 87; IOWRO, OG/AA/31

<sup>80</sup> The fashion for statues in English gardens can arguably be traced back to the 'connoisseur, collector and promoter of all things Italian', Sir Thomas Howard, who famously laid out his garden at Arundel House c. 1614 with classical statuary: Strong, *The Artist in the Garden*, pp. 47-8; David Howarth, *Lord Arundel and his Circle* (London: Yale University Press, 1985), p. 63

As was discussed in the Introduction, all of these kinds of structural features have been identified by Sir Roy Strong as having their roots in the Italian Renaissance style and the gardens at Trentham Hall provide a particularly good example of such features being incorporated into the gardens of the gentry a century and a half after they were first seen in Italy. The building of steps, as noted at Trentham and at Halland House, implies a degree of levelling and terracing which was one of the characteristic features of such gardens, as were ornate fountains and statues. As well as the much cited example of the house and gardens at Llanerch, Robert Plot's *History of Staffordshire* includes an engraving of the house and gardens of one of Sir Richard Leveson's near neighbours, Sir Walter Chetwynd at Ingestre Hall, which also incorporates many of these features. Although there is no date for the Ingestre garden, it is known that the house was rebuilt in 1613,<sup>81</sup> so it is possible that the gardens would have been created around this time and likely to have pre-dated the garden at Trentham. Although these illustrations have their limitations, the gardens at Ingestre appear to be on a much grander scale than those at Trentham which I would tentatively suggest are a somewhat 'low-grade' imitation of the Italian renaissance style, but which nevertheless provide an excellent example of how such garden styles were gradually being incorporated, to one degree or another, in the gentry gardens of rural England.

---

<sup>81</sup>< [www.ingestrehall.co.uk/history](http://www.ingestrehall.co.uk/history) > [accessed 23.05.2011]



**Figure 38 Engraving of Ingestre Hall by Michael Burghers**  
from Robert Plot, *The Natural History of Staffordshire*, 1686, pp. 298-99

The completion of the fountain, appears to mark the end of the structural work on the gardens at Trentham and in the winter of 1635 the first payments for plants start to appear, but most of these are of a very uninteresting nature. 960 young hedging plants and 1000 willows were purchased on January 23rd, and the following week Thomas Wilkinson was sent to buy young fruit trees. There is absolutely no mention of anything more exotic such as the plants and flowers being purchased by Sir John Oglander at Nunwell House; there is not even any mention of traditional flowers such as Sir Thomas Temple's roses and gillyflowers. Of course, this doesn't mean that there were no flowers in the garden, only that none are recorded, but from here onwards, the accounts simply show payments for 'labour in the garden', 'labour in the orchard', digging, 'to the gardener', 'mending the water pots', and in the summer the weeding women appear on a regular basis. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that, although Sir Richard Leveson has invested a great deal of time and expense in the creation of his new garden at Trentham Hall and it is clear that this

garden incorporates many of the latest fashionable styles and features, he does not appear to share Sir John Oglander's or Sir John Reresby's passion for exotic flowers and plants, or even Sir Thomas Temple's love of sweet smelling flowers. Despite this however, he is still anxious to create a garden which is 'fit and answerable to the degree he holds',<sup>82</sup> complementing his newly rebuilt house, showing off his wealth and reflecting his status.

So, from this evidence then, what conclusions can we come to about changes in the early seventeenth-century garden? It would seem that for floral enthusiasts such as Sir John Oglander, Sir John Reresby, Sir Henry Fanshawe, Sir Henry Belasyse and the Reverend Stonehouse, there were untold opportunities to indulge their passion for exotic and beautiful flowers. Not only were more and more plants becoming available, but at the same time it was becoming acceptable and indeed desirable to be able to display such objects of luxury in gardens. However, evidence would also indicate that flowers were not the only way to beautify a garden and that ornamentation such as discussed above could equally be displayed in gardens to indicate wealth and status. But whatever the case, whether filled with flowers or ornament, whether fashionable or not and whether separate or not, ornamental pleasure gardens were clearly becoming a notable feature of early seventeenth-century gardens.

---

<sup>82</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 3



### **3.3 ‘A Friend, a Booke, and a Garden shall for the future, perfectly circumscribe my utmost designes’:<sup>1</sup> The Civil War years and the Interregnum**

The literature, gardens and gardening activities discussed so far have taken us through the years of relative peace and prosperity prior to the upheaval of the Civil Wars, but what of the remaining years of our period? Looking ahead to 1660, had there been any further discernible changes in the practices of early modern gardeners? The remainder of this chapter will examine this question, identifying as before both continuities and changes in practice, and considering whether the gardeners of the 1640s and 50s were looking backwards to more settled times for their inspiration, or whether they were pointing the way forward to a new way of thinking which was only to come to fruition in the post-Restoration era.

As was discussed in Chapter 1, little new gardening literature was published during this period, but two major sources of extant evidence remain to help provide answers to these questions: the diaries, correspondence and in particular the drawings of John Evelyn and the notebooks and manuscripts of Sir Thomas Hanmer. The work of both these men during the mid-seventeenth century provide particular insight into the world of the gardening enthusiast during this time, because as well as writing and reflecting upon contemporary gardening practice, they were both actively engaged in actually creating gardens during the 1640s and 50s. Sir Thomas Hanmer’s notebooks and manuscripts provide details of the garden he created at the family home at Bettisfield Hall in Flintshire as well as evidence that he was also involved, a few years earlier, in the planting of two other gardens: one at his mother’s dower house in nearby Haulton and one at his house in Lewisham near

---

<sup>1</sup> John Evelyn, 1651: Cited in Evelyn, *Elysium Britannicum*, Introduction by John Ingram, ed., p. 3



London. Likewise, from John Evelyn's copious correspondence we have evidence of his involvement, in an advisory capacity at least, with the remodelling of the garden at the Evelyn's ancestral home at Wotton in Surrey, now belonging to his brother George, as well as the major work he undertook in developing the garden at Sayes Court in Deptford, his own home for over forty years. In addition to his extensive writings, Evelyn also produced plans and drawings of all of these gardens, allowing us to compare both the differences between the gardens as well as, in the case of Wotton House, the differences in the garden before and after the alterations were carried out.

Both Hanmer and Evelyn were Royalists and expediently removed themselves to the Continent during the Civil War years and this experience, as shall be shown, was reflected in their gardening practice once they returned home. In May 1644, Sir Thomas, a former cup-bearer to the King, obtained leave, upon payment of a fine to parliament, to take his family to live in France and for the next six years he lived variously in Paris, Nantes and Angers. There is also some evidence that Hanmer had already spent several years prior to this travelling on the Continent with his brother although few details are known.<sup>2</sup> He returned to England in 1651, settling back into his ancestral home at Bettisfield later in the decade. Evelyn too left England in 1643: 'the Covenant being pressed, I absented myselfe' he wrote in his diary, thereby avoiding swearing an oath of loyalty to parliament.<sup>3</sup> He embarked on a 'Grand Tour' of Europe, spending several years travelling in Holland, France and Italy, recording in his diary visits to ancient sites, including churches, colleges, monasteries and military installations as well as grand palaces and magnificent gardens, still finding some time too for study at the University of Padua. In July 1646, he reached

---

<sup>2</sup> *Garden Book*, Introduction, p. xi

<sup>3</sup> *Diary*, II, p. 81

Paris and met with a number of Royalists either compulsory or, like himself, voluntary exiles from England. He also met Sir Richard Browne, ambassador in France to Charles I, and in 1647, Evelyn married his daughter Mary, who was then just 12 years old. In 1652, he and his wife returned to England for good to take possession of his father-in-law's somewhat rundown estate at Sayes Court in Deptford.

In some ways then, there are identifiable similarities between Hanmer and Evelyn's experiences during these years: they both spent a significant amount of time living and working abroad, particularly in France, where it is possible that they were acquainted.<sup>4</sup> As will be demonstrated, they were both, to varying degrees, exposed to and influenced by the continental gardening styles that they encountered and once they returned home, both continued to purchase plants from the nurserymen they had come to know in Paris. Both returned to the uncertain world of the new Cromwellian regime and with no role in the new order, devoted themselves instead to the renovation of their respective neglected estates and, in particular, their gardens.

So what can be learnt of contemporary gardening practice from the writings of these two men? How does an examination of their various papers and manuscripts shed further light on the themes already identified in this chapter: garden layout, the place of the ornamental garden, the passion for rare and exotic flowers, new horticultural techniques?

---

<sup>4</sup> Sir Thomas corresponded with Sir Richard Browne on a number of occasions while he was in France (see for instance BL, Evelyn, Add. 15858, fols 11, 13, 14) and once Evelyn and Hanmer had returned to England, their respective homes in Deptford and Lewisham would have made them close neighbours. On 1<sup>st</sup> April Hanmer visited Evelyn and a few weeks later on 27<sup>th</sup> May, Evelyn visited Hanmer: *Diary*, III, pp. 191, 193. Their continued correspondence over the years regarding horticultural matters is well-documented.

Probably the most complete picture we have of a mid-seventeenth century garden is the one created by John Evelyn at Sayes Court in the early 1650s, beautifully depicted in an extant detailed plan drawn by Evelyn in 1653 (see **Figure 39** over). This garden is mentioned in his diary and in his correspondence with his father-in-law, Sir Richard Browne from whom Evelyn had taken over management of the family seat. Whether this plan was carried out exactly as shown is of course a moot point, but it is indicative of his intentions and parts of it at least are referred to elsewhere in Evelyn's papers.

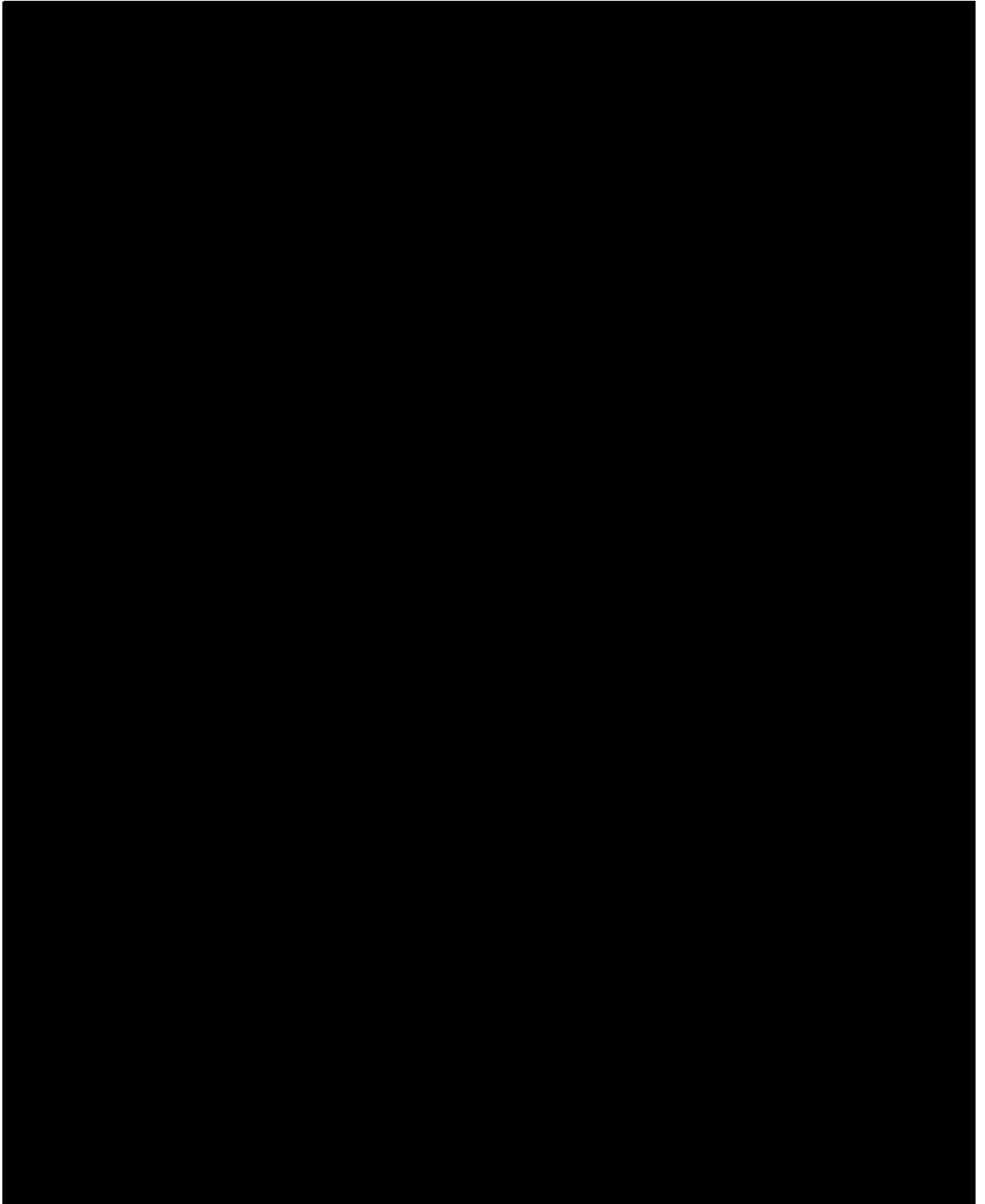
We do not know a great deal about the garden at Sayes Court before Evelyn began work on it in the 1650s, although Evelyn's first (of only two) diary entries referring to his new garden implies that he was working from a fairly blank canvas. On 17 January 1653, he records:

I began to set out the Ovall Garden, which was before a rude ortchard & all the rest one intire fild of 100 Ackers, without any hedge: excepting the hither holly-hedge joyning to the bank of the mount walk: and this was the beginning of all the succeeding Gardens, Walkes, Groves, Enclosures and Plantations there.<sup>5</sup>

The only other clues we have are a few references to the old garden in correspondence from Christopher Browne, father of Sir Richard Browne, who lived at Sayes Court until his death in the 1640s, to his son in Paris. It appears from his remarks that the war was taking its toll and could explain the dilapidated state of the garden by the time Evelyn took it over. He refers to the digging and replanting of the old orchard a number of times, but regrets that 'my thoughts being now in these desparate tymes more fix't upon the meanes to preserve that wee have lost than to adventure any part thereof towards the improvement of

---

<sup>5</sup> *Diary*, III, p. 80



**Figure 39 Plan of Sayes Court by John Evelyn, 1653**  
BL, Evelyn, Add. 78628A

that which is to come'.<sup>6</sup> Elsewhere he deplores the difficulty in finding workmen to plash the Barbary hedge observing bitterly that 'to follow the drummer and to plunder' is 'a newe trade more easie and proffitable'.<sup>7</sup> Later the same year he writes that two men 'have alreadie diggd the Mount and planted it with beanes and pease'.<sup>8</sup> Whether this was the normal practice at Sayes Court or another sign of the straitened times is impossible to tell, but planting an ornamental feature such as the mount with staple food crops such as peas and beans is certainly unusual. Elsewhere however, Browne mentions gravel walks, borders with a variety of herbs and flowers, roses, strawberries and raspberries, so the garden, such as it was, clearly fulfilled the usual utilitarian and decorative functions. Presumably, the few years of neglect before Evelyn took over the garden would have been long enough for all trace of the flowers and soft fruit to have disappeared.

Evelyn set about renovating the garden with enthusiasm, creating, as the plan graphically reveals, a garden which consisted of a series of hedged, fenced and walled enclosures, representing a miscellany of styles reflecting Evelyn's various interests and influences. There is little attempt at any overall symmetry which in any case is made virtually impossible by the irregular shape of the land available. As can be seen from the plan, it was an elongated triangular plot, bordered to the north by the River Thames and to the east by a ditch which ran from the Thames to feed the carp pond at the southern corner of the garden.<sup>9</sup> The likelihood is that the plan was drawn to be sent to his father-in-law in Paris with whom Evelyn kept up a continual correspondence about the renovations of the house

---

<sup>6</sup> BL, Evelyn, Add. 78220, CB to RB, 6th November 1643

<sup>7</sup> BL, Evelyn, Add. 15857, CB to RB, 9th February 1642

<sup>8</sup> BL, Evelyn, Add. 15857, CB to RB, 16th March 1642

<sup>9</sup> The plan is orientated with South to the top and North to the bottom.

and garden at Sayes Court.<sup>10</sup> Although no trace of this garden now exists, the plan is so detailed and its key so well annotated that it is possible to walk around it, albeit in our imaginations, just as the many visitors recorded in Evelyn's diaries would have done.

Presuming an arrival by road, the first obvious feature would have been the double rows of lime trees lining the walk to the main gate. This is something with which Evelyn had been especially taken on his travels in Holland during the previous decade, where he admired the neat orderliness of the Dutch towns and in particular the Dutch practice of planting long regular rows of trees. Following a visit to Wilhelmstadt he comments in his diary on 'a stately row of Limes on the Ramparts' and in Amsterdam 'Streetes so exactly straight ... being so frequently planted and shaded with beautiful lime trees, which are set in rows before every mans house'.<sup>11</sup> Evelyn appears to have been innovative in adopting this method of planting in his own garden at Sayes Court and is credited with being the first person to use the term 'avenue' to describe such tree lined routes.<sup>12</sup>

After entering the gates into the walled court in front of the house, the path continues between two bowling greens, a common feature of gardens since Elizabethan times. Beyond the wall to the right was a milking close planted with walnut trees and beyond that the carp pond, also used, according to Evelyn's detailed annotations, as a watering place.<sup>13</sup>

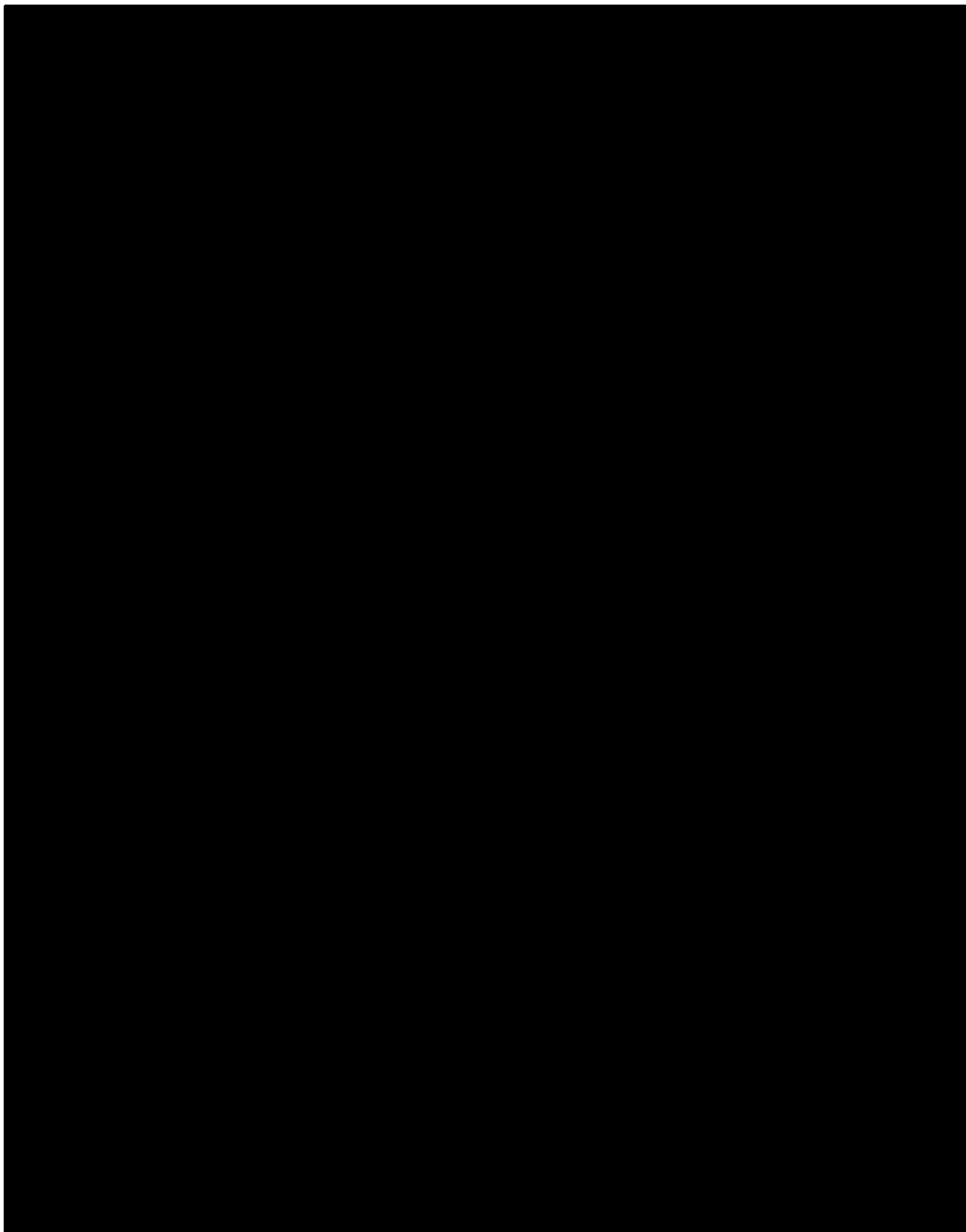
---

<sup>10</sup> In February 1652 he writes to Browne promising that 'likewise you will receive a full and perfect Ichnography of all such alterations as I have made in this ruind place, which if approved by you will add much to our satisfaction': BL, Evelyn, Add. 78221, fol. 60

<sup>11</sup> *Diary*, II, pp. 60, 46

<sup>12</sup> Timothy Mowl, *Gentlemen and Players: Gardeners of the English Landscape* (Stroud: Sutton, 2000), p. 36

<sup>13</sup> All the following information such as this about the garden is taken from the plan and the annotations added by Evelyn, unless stated otherwise.

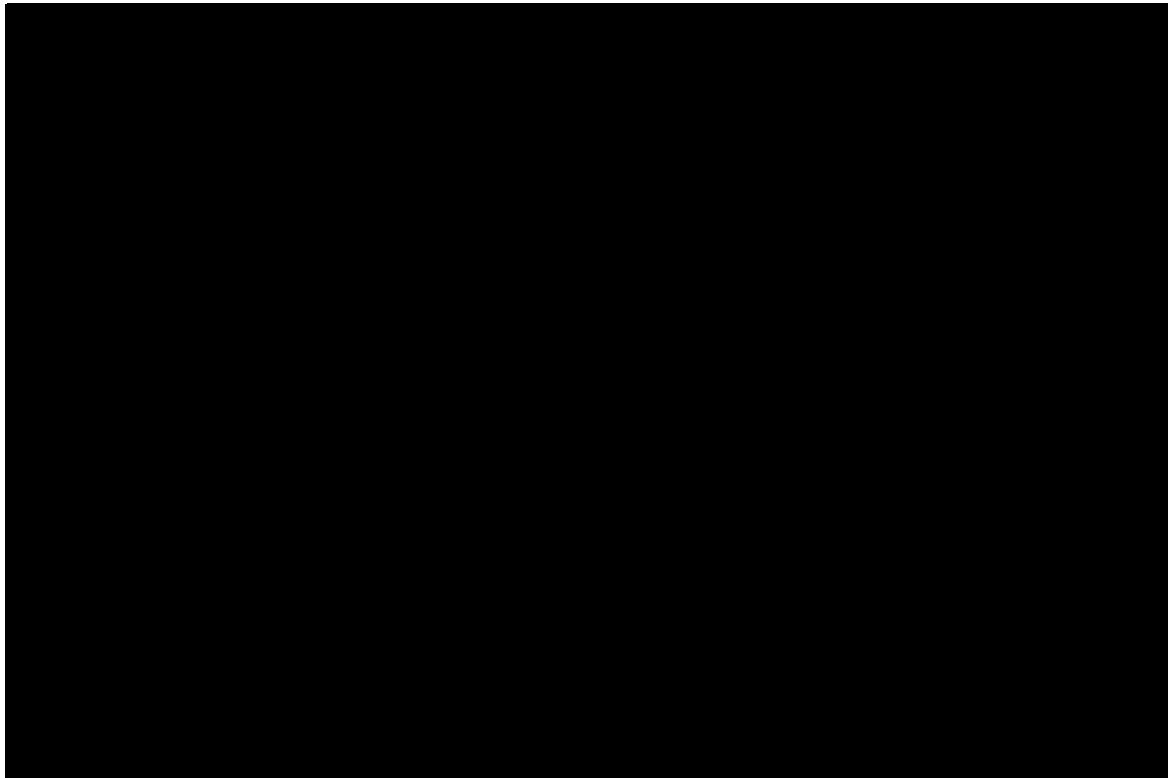


**Figure 40** Detail from John Evelyn's Plan of Sayes Court  
showing the entrance leading to the house

Excerpts from Evelyn's key, referring to the numbers on the plan:

- 25. The Courte, with faire gravel walkes planted with Cipresse and the walls with fruit.*
- 26. The Bowling Greenes betwixt.*
- 29. Grasse plots where the Cowes are milked.*
- 30. The carpe pond*
- 31. The Garden dore out of the Court.*

Turning to the left in front of the house led through a garden door out of the court and into what Evelyn describes in his diary as ‘the Ovall garden’.<sup>14</sup> This was a purely ornamental garden, consisting of gravel walks set about an ‘oval Square’, with four evergreen thickets at the corners of the square and forming the oval, grass plots set with flowers in pots, a round parterre divided into twelve beds of flowers with paths between them and a dial set on a mount in the centre.



**Figure 41 Detail of John Evelyn's Plan of Sayes Court  
showing the Oval Garden**

Excerpts from Evelyn's key, referring to the numbers on the plan:

- 36. The Garden, and walkes of Gravel about the oval Square*
- 37. The evergreen thicket, for Birds, private walkes, shades and Cabinetts*
- 38. The Grasse plots sett about with a Border, in which flower Potts*
- 39. The Round Parterre of Box with 12 Beds of flowers & passages betwixt each bed*
- 40. The Mount, Center, and Dial*
- 43. The Long Pourmenade from the Banquetting house to the Island*
- 44. The Banquetting House*
- 47. The Terras walke or mount*
- 92. The Holley Hedge, at the side of the mount or Terras*
- 93. The Berbery hedge*

---

<sup>14</sup> *Diary*, III, p. 80, 17 Jan 1653



Cyprus trees, a popular choice for ornamental gardens because of their pleasing conical habit, punctuated the corners of the parterres and grass plots. The symmetry of this garden is somewhat compromised by its slightly offset placement within its boundaries, which are different on every side: a wooden pale to the south, a brick wall to the east, a hedge to the north and rows of fruit trees to the east. We are reminded of John Parkinson's observation that despite the 'four square proportion' being ideal, 'many men must be content with any plat of ground' – including, it would seem, John Evelyn.<sup>15</sup>

What is particularly interesting about the oval garden is that it is almost identical to one belonging to the renowned nurseryman Monsieur Pierre Morin that Evelyn had visited and admired in Paris in April 1644.<sup>16</sup> It appears that as well as the exquisite planting, Evelyn was also so impressed with the design of this garden that once he returned to England, he set about making his own copy at Sayes Court. It must be emphasised that this was no subliminal influence at work here – it was Evelyn's declared intention. He refers on more than one occasion to 'my Morine Garden'<sup>17</sup> and he writes to his father-in-law in September 1652 asking for clarification of the measurements 'for my better comparing of my plot with that of Mr Morines'.<sup>18</sup> A drawing of Morin's garden executed by Richard Symonds in 1649 makes the similarities between this garden and Evelyn's recreation of it obvious.

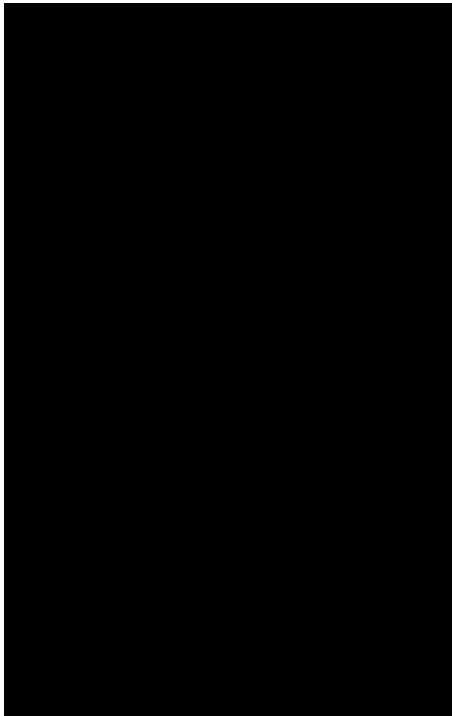
---

<sup>15</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi in Sole*, pp. 5, 3

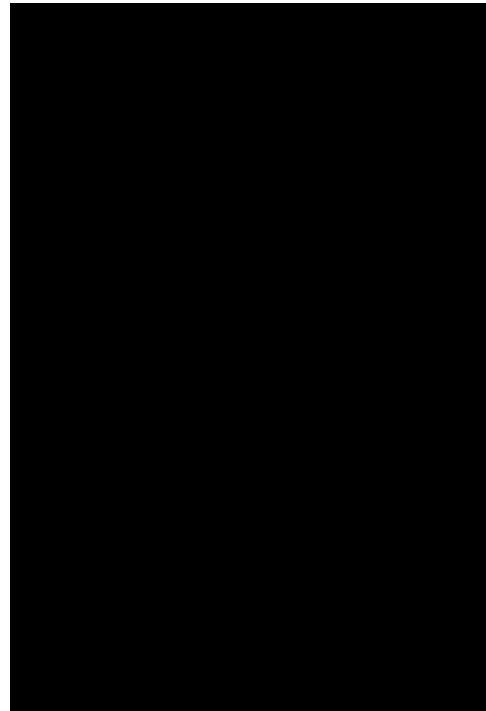
<sup>16</sup> *Diary*, II, p. 133

<sup>17</sup> BL, Evelyn, Add. 78221, fols 61, 63

<sup>18</sup> BL, Evelyn, Add. 78221, fol. 56. Gillian Darley, a recent biographer of Evelyn has suggested that Richard Browne was in fact the 'friend' referred to in his Diary who first took Evelyn to view Morin's garden in 1644, and that his house was almost next door to Morin's garden: Darley, *John Evelyn: Living for Ingenuity* (London: Yale University Press, c.2006), p. 41



**Figure 42 The garden of Pierre Morin  
drawn by Richard Symonds in 1649**  
from Leith-Ross, 'A Seventeenth-Century  
Paris Garden, p. 152



**Figure 43 Detail of the Oval Garden at Sayes  
Court from Evelyn's Plan, 1653**

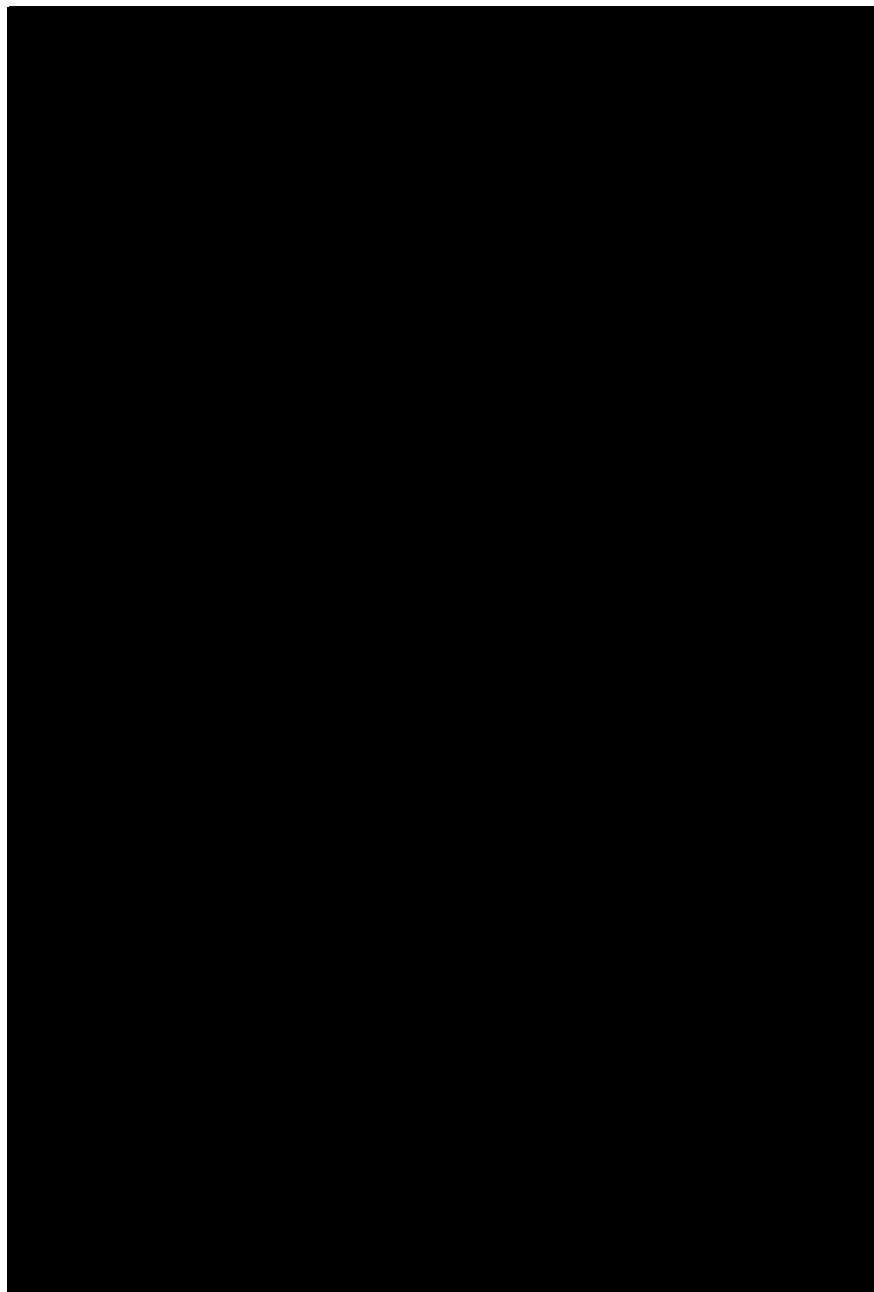
That this venture was clearly a success is confirmed in a subsequent letter, when Evelyn wrote, in 1657 that 'This moyst summer has made my Oval perfect, & the place most beautiful'.<sup>19</sup>

To the north of the oval garden was a terrace or mount, as Evelyn describes it, edged with the holly hedge which he noted in his diary as being already extant when he took over the garden and presumably the same mount referred to by Christopher Browne in his letter. To

---

<sup>19</sup> Cited in Leith-Ross, 'A Seventeenth-Century Paris Garden', *GH*, 21:2 (1993), 150-157 (p. 153). However, as is so often the way, gardeners change their minds and gardens can be easily altered in a season or two. By 1685, the Oval garden had disappeared, to be replaced by a large semicircular bowling-green, surrounded by cherry and pear trees, under-planted with gooseberries and strawberries, with fruit trees such as apples, damson, apricots peaches, vines and figs planted along the north, east and southern borders - a salutary reminder of the dangers of trying to date gardens too precisely: BL, Evelyn, Add. 78628B 'Plan by John Evelyn of part of the south-west portion of the garden at Sayes Court, with a list of fruit trees planted there, February 1685'

the north of the terrace and the west of the house was Evelyn's second ornamental showpiece, the Grove, which more or less forms the central feature of the garden around which the other elements are arranged.



Excerpts from Evelyn's key, referring to the numbers on the plan:

*50. The Grove with the several walkes*

*51. The mount or Center planted with Bayes, but the Circle walke with Laurel*

*52. 14 Cabinetts of Aliternies, and a great French walnut at every one*

*53. The Thicketts.*

*43. The Long Pourmenade*

*103. The moate about the Island*

*105. The Drawbridge of the Island*

*106. The Island just as it is planted with an hedge of severall fruits twixt 8 bedds of Asperge &c: At the two ends are raspberries, and a Summer house at the marke \* the mulberrie tree at the mark X.*

*97. Plotts for pease and beanes &c.*

*95. A Plott for melons*

*94. The Kitchin Garden made into 38 bedds of Pottherbs besides borders &c.*

Figure 44 Detail from John Evelyn's Plan of Sayes Court showing the Grove, the promenade and the Island

This grove was filled with a mixture of oak, ash, elm, beech and chestnut trees: ‘I planted this yeere in my grove 500 trees of good nature brought out of Essex & yet intend to plant therein 800 more’ he reports to Richard Browne in a letter of January 1653.<sup>20</sup> In the centre was a mount planted with bays and a circular walk planted with laurel. Radiating out from here in a geometric pattern were six straight paths. In addition there were a number of what Evelyn calls ‘cabinetts’, small enclosed gardens ‘hidden’ at the end of ‘Spiders Clawes’ or dog-legged paths. These were formed of clipped hedges of *Alaternus*, an evergreen shrub of which Evelyn seemed particularly fond, requesting Browne on a number of occasions to purchase seeds for him from Paris.<sup>21</sup> There were fourteen such cabinettes in Evelyn’s grove, little nooks that provided places for private contemplation. This kind of layout of green rooms or *cabinet de verdure*, set within a wood or *bosquet* cut through with paths and alleys radiating from a semicircle or other central point is reminiscent of the style emerging on a much larger scale in the designs of Mollet and Le Notre in the royal gardens of France and around Europe.<sup>22</sup> Again, it is likely that Evelyn’s choice of design was influenced by gardens he had seen or heard of on the continent.

Running alongside the west of the oval garden and the grove was a long promenade which stretched the entire length of the garden, from a banqueting house at the southern end to the bridge across to a small island at the northern end. Such banqueting houses and islands

---

<sup>20</sup> BL, Evelyn, Add. 78221, fol. 63

<sup>21</sup> BL, Evelyn, Add. 78221, fols 61, 63, 65. ‘Of *Alaternus* I have thousands, and yet desire more seeds’ Evelyn writes to Browne in October 1656. According to Timothy Mowl, Pierre Morin made his fortune importing *Alaternus* bushes from the South of France and selling them on in his Paris nursery: Mowl, *Gentlemen and Players*, p. 42

<sup>22</sup> For a brief summary of the features of French garden style, see Hunt and Willis, eds., *The Genius of the Place*, p. 7. For more on French gardens see Kenneth Woodbridge, *Princely Gardens: The origins and development of the French formal style* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986). For contemporary French garden designs see Mollet, *Le Jardin de Plaisir* (1651).

had been ornamental features of grand Elizabethan gardens<sup>23</sup> but it is interesting to note that, as well as the majority of the length of the promenade being hedged with apple trees, Evelyn's island was given over to the growing of raspberries and asparagus and the moat around the island was 'stored with Carpe, Swannes, Duckes &c', all of which were valuable sources of food. This conflation of the ornamental with the utilitarian seems an appropriate transition point in the tour as it essentially marks the end of the ornamental aspects of the garden and from here on in we see that the rest of Evelyn's garden is still chiefly a utilitarian one. A glance at the plan shows that the orchard takes up a large proportion of the entire garden area and moving back towards the house from the island are two large plots for peas and beans, then a large kitchen garden containing two plots for melons and 38 further beds of vegetables, salads and herbs for culinary use. The adjacent dung pit has been discussed earlier in this chapter, but serves to remind us of the ever-present practicalities of gardening in the seventeenth century.

The remaining two small areas of the garden consist of a nursery and what Evelyn refers to as his 'Private garden'. The nursery, equipped with a 'Pump and Cistern for the infusion of Dungs', was an area for bringing on new plants and seeds before transplanting them into the garden. He writes excitedly to Browne in September 1652 that 'I am transplanting my Glorious Nursery of neere 800 plantes (two foote high & and as fayre as I ever sawy any in France) about our Court, and as farr as they will reach in our Oval Garden'.<sup>24</sup> The private garden of 'choice flowers, and Simples' was located between the nursery and the house and was, as noted in so many other examples, outside the Parlour which now had a new

---

<sup>23</sup> See for instance drawings of those at Hatfield House or Bacon's home at Gorhambury in Henderson, *Tudor House and Garden*, pp. 134, 133

<sup>24</sup> BL, Evelyn, Add. 78221, fol. 56

window to look out into the garden. It was enclosed within walls, with doors out into the nursery and into the oval garden, laid out in the usual four square form with a fountain in the centre, an aviary outside the parlour window, a beehive against the northern wall and a Gardeners 'toolehouse' that was also used to store fruit – all fairly conventional. However, what was unusual was the presence of an 'Elaboratorie' in this garden which Evelyn describes as having a 'Portico of 20 foot long upon Pillars open towards the Private Garden'. Ironically, this ultra-modern addition to the garden appears to incorporate the only reference at Sayes Court to Evelyn's well-documented interest in the classical past, although perhaps, as in his writing, it was an attempt to invest the activity of gardening with an intellectual status.<sup>25</sup> The purpose of this laboratory is not made clear, but given Evelyn's association with the Hartlib circle and his interest in the new science, it is certainly a possibility that this was where he would have made trials of plants, particularly 'the ever greenes', continually arriving from France, secured by Browne, many of which he says were 'unknown to me', but for which he is nevertheless prepared to 'give any price'.<sup>26</sup> Comments such as these make it clear that Browne was introducing Evelyn to a range of plants seemingly not yet available in England.

So what does this brief tour of the garden at Sayes Court tell us about gardens and gardening in mid-seventeenth century England? Despite an eclectic selection of innovative features – the avenue of trees, the oval garden, the grove, the 'elaboratorie' – in essence

---

<sup>25</sup> See pp. 50-51 above

<sup>26</sup> BL, Evelyn, Add. 78221, fol. 65, 19<sup>th</sup> October 1656. Naomi Sheeter has explored in detail this important aspect of Evelyn's life, concluding that there was much interplay between gardening and science at this time, as manifested by the work of members of the Hartlib circle, of which Evelyn was a member, and it seems likely that at the same time as making trials of new horticultural techniques, he was also using his existing knowledge of gardens and gardening as a means of furthering scientific experiment: Naomi Sheeter, *Harnessing Nature: Gardens and Science in John Evelyn's England* (unpublished M.Phil. thesis, University of Birmingham, 2000)

this garden is still quite conventional. It contains features that would not have been out of place in an Elizabethan setting and provides all the utilitarian functions required of a garden. However, at the same time it allows space for Evelyn to indulge his passion for plants and trees – and as will be reiterated in the discussion of Hanmer's work, the prominent place of the ornamental garden seems established and accepted. Influences from abroad, in terms of inspiration, ideas and plants are all very evident, particularly Evelyn's persistent seeking out of evergreens and new varieties of flowers with which he is unfamiliar - his interest in science and experiment is married quite happily to his interest in gardening.

However, having noted a variety of styles and influences at work in the creation of Sayes Court, when the garden at the family home at Wotton in Surrey, inherited by Evelyn's elder brother George from his father in 1640, which Evelyn aided his brother to comprehensively redesign in the 1650s is considered, the contrast in styles is even more marked. The work on this garden is mentioned in his diary, in a series of letters from George to his brother written while Evelyn was still living in France and by a series of drawings executed by Evelyn which are extremely illuminating in that they show the garden both before and after its remodelling, as well as highlighting some of the features mentioned in other sources.

The earliest description of the garden at Wotton comes in Evelyn's Diary where, in an entry dated 1620, he records:

The house is large and antient, suitable to those hospitable times, and so sweetely environ'd with those delicious streames and venerable Woods, as in the judgement of strangers, as well as English-men, it may be compared to one of the most tempting and pleasant seates in the Nation [...] for it has risings, meadows, Woods & Water in abundance;<sup>27</sup>

This is a somewhat nostalgic and idealised description of the house and garden at the time of his birth, obviously written with hindsight, the allusion to hospitality and abundance also harking back to a bygone age when all was well with the world.<sup>28</sup> Evelyn's most authoritative biographer and editor of his diaries E. S. De Beer has dated the writing of the extant diary to the 1680s when Evelyn wrote it up from notes he had kept throughout his life, so all entries have to be read with caution and bearing this in mind, but by way of corroboration, there is a drawing, executed by Evelyn, showing the house and garden as it was 'before my Bro: alterd it & as it was 1640'.<sup>29</sup>

This drawing depicts a large rambling Tudor house with a fairly small walled garden in front of it, divided into three, with a hint of a geometric arrangement of knots or beds in one of them and some kind of a garden structure, possibly a still-house or a summerhouse. Outside the wall is a stream or 'moate' as Evelyn annotates it in his drawing, which elsewhere he describes as being 'within 10 yards of the very house'.<sup>30</sup> Still further from the house, and the vantage point of the picture, is an area roughly depicted as a mound of trees - presumably the 'venerable Woods' of his description.

---

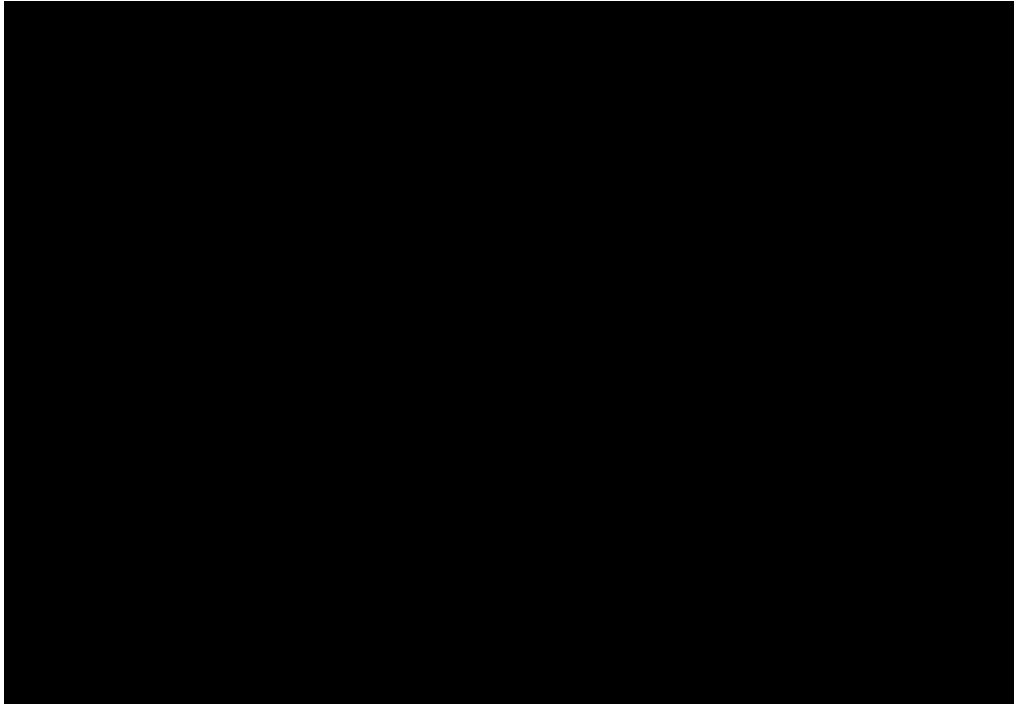
<sup>27</sup> *Diary*, II, p. 4

<sup>28</sup> See Heal, 'The Idea of Hospitality in Early Modern England', p. 68. This style of writing is also reminiscent of the country house poems of Jonson, Carew and Marvel - with which Evelyn was sure to be familiar - which celebrated an idealised view of rural life. For more on country house poetry, see Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1973)

<sup>29</sup> BL, Evelyn, Add. 78610A

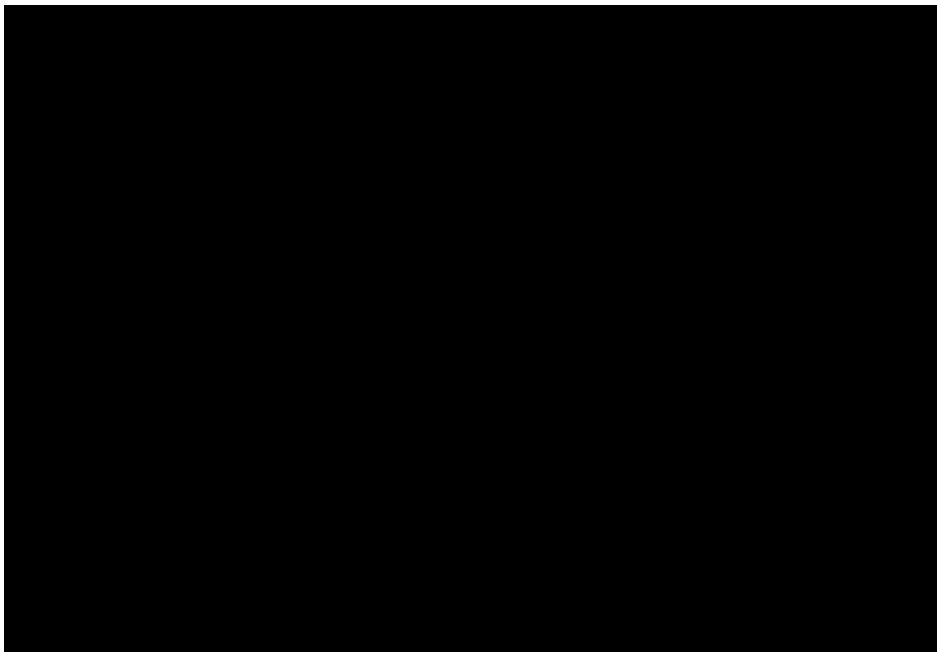
<sup>30</sup> *Diary*, III, p. 61, 22 February 1652





**Figure 45 'A Rude draght of Wotton Garden' by John Evelyn, 1640**

A second drawing, which is apparently done at the same time, shows the view from the opposite side of the house.<sup>31</sup>



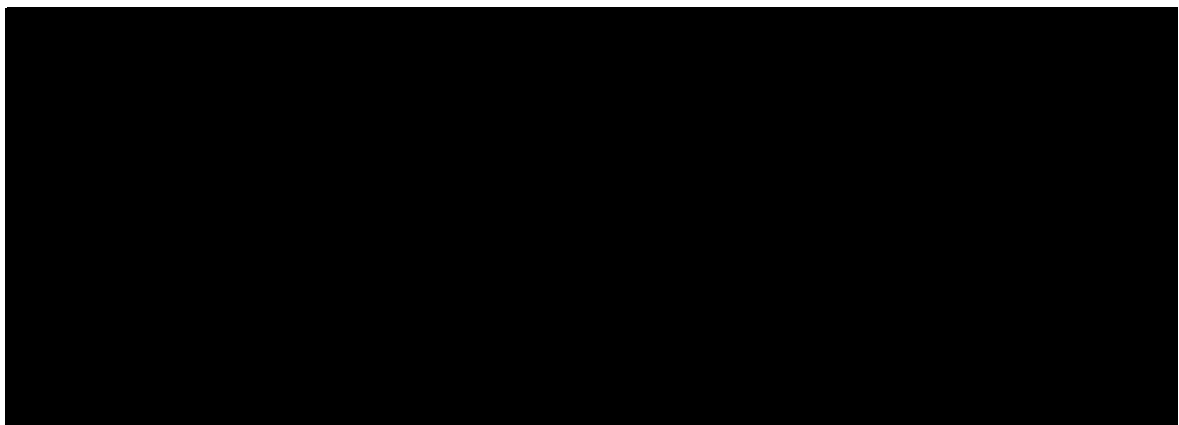
**Figure 46 'Prospect of the old house at Wotton 1640' by John Evelyn**

---

<sup>31</sup> BL, Evelyn, Add. 78610B

From this it is possible to see that the ‘moate’ opens out into a large duck pond and that there is a large barn and a pigeon house. The mound of trees now forms the background of the drawing. All in all, the garden at that time comprised a fairly random arrangement of utilitarian and ornamental areas close about the house, with woods and meadows extending further afield, indicating that it was probably little changed from the previous century and would seem to concur with Evelyn’s description of his childhood home before the garden was remodelled.

The next reference is in May 1643 when Evelyn notes that with his brother’s permission, he has embarked upon some alterations to the garden at Wotton mentioning specifically ‘a study, a fishpond, lland, and some other solitudes and retirements, which gave first occasion of improving those Water-Works and Gardens, which afterwards succeeded them’.<sup>32</sup> Another drawing by Evelyn, dated 1646, shows these additions to the garden, with a small garden pavilion and pond labelled ‘this study & pond was made by me’.<sup>33</sup>



**Figure 47 ‘Prospect of Wotton Gardens and house: as altred by my Bro: 1646’  
by John Evelyn**

---

<sup>32</sup> *Diary*, II, p. 81

<sup>33</sup> BL, Evelyn, Add. 78610C

As indicated in the diary entry however, this minor work was merely a prelude to a much more comprehensive overhaul of the garden carried out by George Evelyn with his brother's help and advice a few years later.

The nature of this renovation is best described in a series of letters written by brother George to John while the latter was still living in France.<sup>34</sup> Once again, the evidence in the letters is corroborated by more drawings done by Evelyn which illustrate the new garden once it was completed in 1653. The letters are not in particularly good condition and many are damaged, torn, incomplete and undated, but enough can be seen to infer if not George's complete reliance on advice from his brother, at least a wish for his approval of the plans. He informs John in a letter written in 1650 of 'work I have in hand which is levelling my hill behind the house and makinge a Bowlinge Green, some walkes and other [?devices] [...] I intend to make upon my hill a very spacious Grotto'.<sup>35</sup> In another letter he promises to send John a plan of the new garden, and hopes that he will be pleased with it. It also appears that a Cousin Evelyn – also confusingly called George – was the 'Architector' of this plan and came up with the original design for the garden.<sup>36</sup> Brother George makes several references to this in his letters to John, asking at the same time for 'your noble advice; which I shall endeavour in all particulars to observe'.<sup>37</sup> And it is clear that John does offer advice, particularly on the water works and the decoration of the grotto. 'For the water I shall punctually observe your directions' writes George, but regarding the furnishing of the intended grotto, he remarks ruefully that 'I wish our country afforded me

---

<sup>34</sup> BL, Evelyn, Add. 78303

<sup>35</sup> BL, Evelyn, Add. 78303, GE to JE, ?1650

<sup>36</sup> BL, Evelyn, Add. 78303, GE to JE, ?1650

<sup>37</sup> BL, Evelyn, Add. 78303, GE to JE, ?1650

with such gallant materials as your [?letters] dictate'.<sup>38</sup> However, he assures his brother that he will do his best to obtain the recommended materials, enlisting the help of friends and engaging the services of a 'Barbadoes Merchant to furnish me with the curious Rocks of that Iland & with Corall, Conching & other shells' for which he will spare no cost.<sup>39</sup>

Remarks such as this need putting into a context. Evelyn's diaries covering the years he was travelling around Europe reveal that he was very taken with the Renaissance gardens of Italy and France. He describes with enthusiasm, for instance, the grottos in the Tivoli gardens at the Palace D'Este which are richly decorated with shells and coral, or the gardens of the Grand Dukes at Pratoline which are 'delicious and full of fountains [...and...] in another Grotto is Vulcan and his family, the walls richly composed of Coralls, Shells, Coper & Marble figures; with the huntings of Severall beasts, moving by the force of the water'.<sup>40</sup> It is interesting to note that, at this time in his life at least, Evelyn's interest in gardens was more to do with the artificial, the ingenious and the mechanical rather than in the plants, which he rarely mentions. It is also important to acknowledge De Beer's note of caution that much of this part of the diary was written not just retrospectively as already mentioned, but that much of it has been shown to be taken from travel books of the time, and may not actually represent what Evelyn really saw. Nevertheless, this does not detract from the essential point that he has chosen to describe these elements of the garden because these are the aspects that attracted his attention. What does seem clear is that his descriptions of these wonderful gardens with their elaborate water works and richly

---

<sup>38</sup> Timothy Mowl observes that, although 'he tried to suggest that his advice had been asked for', John Evelyn in fact had little or nothing to do with the remodelling of the garden at Wotton, as he was in Paris at the time: Mowl, *Gentlemen and Players*, p. 39. However, the evidence in the correspondence cited above would indicate otherwise.

<sup>39</sup> BL, Evelyn, Add. 78303 GE to JE ?1650

<sup>40</sup> *Diary*, II, pp. 394-397, 418

decorated grottos had inspired his brother to attempt to emulate them. The fact that cousin George Evelyn had also travelled much in Italy probably aided in the execution of these ideas.

By the following year however, the original plan had been changed because, according to George, the Ladies of the house had persuaded him that they would rather have a garden and a fountain instead of a bowling green. He obviously complies as he writes to John at the end of the summer in 1651 ‘that I have almost levelled the hill behind the house & built my walls, the nexte worke wilbe to designe the ground for a garden and fountagne’. Again he resolves to send the plan to John in France ‘to begg your advise & observations’,<sup>41</sup> but in fact John returned to England soon after this and was able to view the now completed alterations for himself.<sup>42</sup> It would be very difficult for us to envisage the extent and form of these alterations if it were not for the fact that Evelyn executed a number of extant drawings and plans of the finished garden.

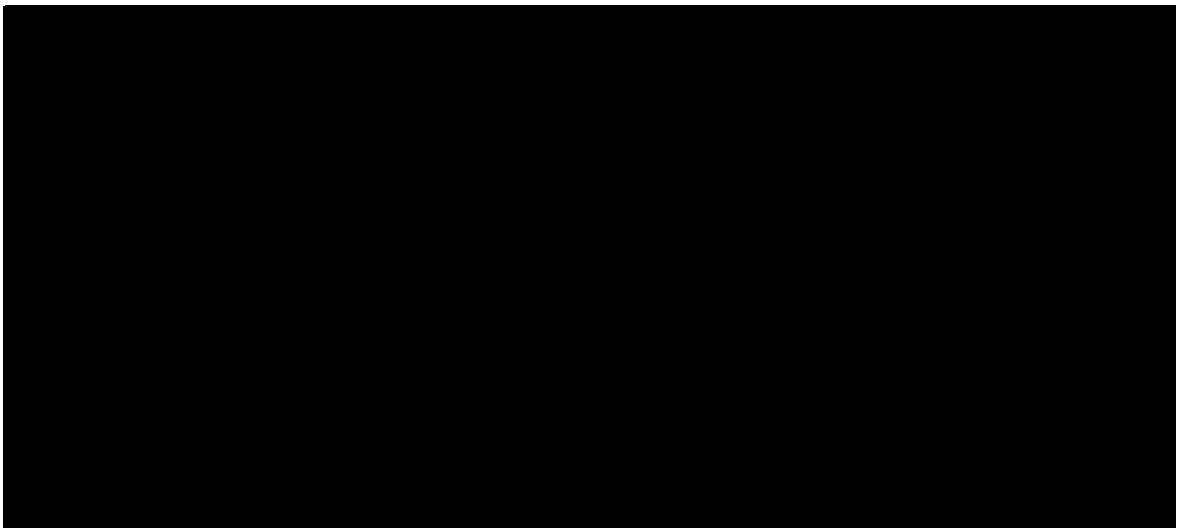
---

<sup>41</sup> BL, Evelyn, Add. 78303, GE to JE, 29 Sept 1651 from Wotton

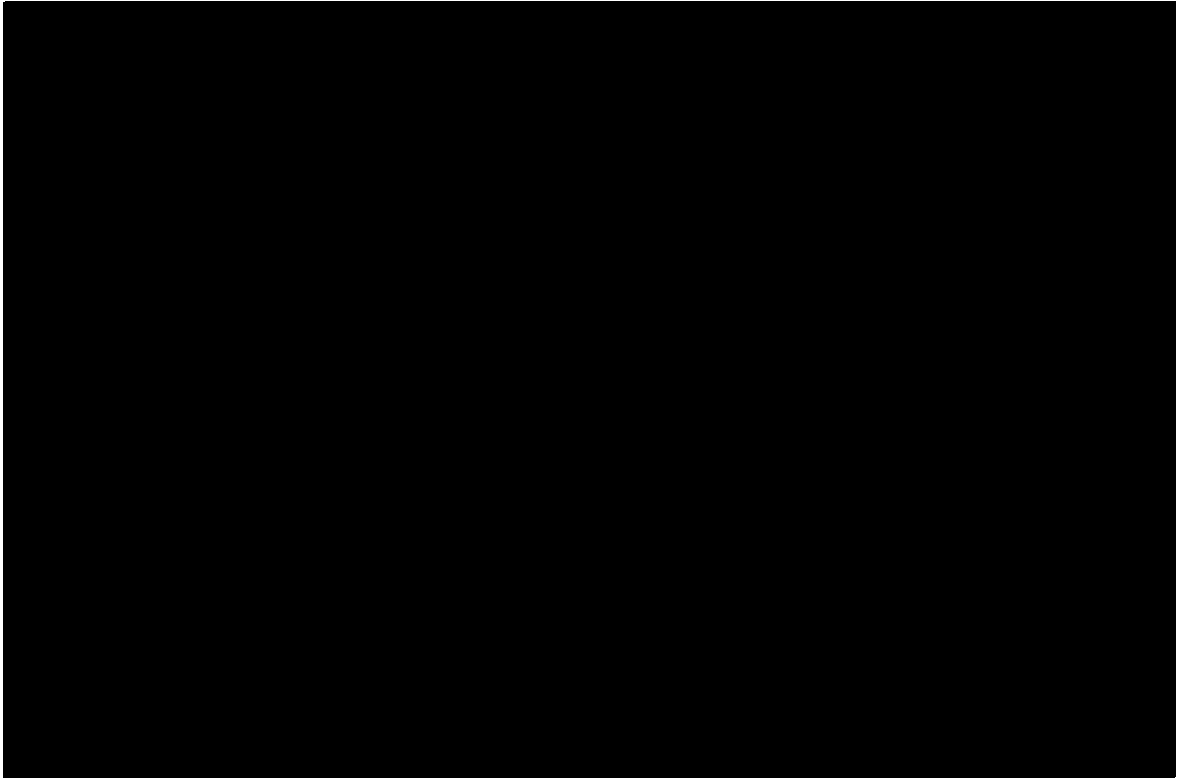
<sup>42</sup> As alluded to in n. 38 above, this is a moot point. Evelyn records in his diary on 22 Feb 1651/2 ‘I went to my Bro: Evelyn at Wotton, to give him what directions I was able about his Garden, which he was now desirous to put into some form’: *Diary*, III, p. 61. This obviously represents a contradiction as it is apparently clear from the correspondence that this work had already been done by this time, but as much of Evelyn’s diary was written retrospectively, this could be enough explanation for the discrepancy in dates. What seems more unequivocal however is that Evelyn writes of this again in *De Vita Propria*, a more polished version of his early Diary which he began to compile in his later years, where he recalls that the alterations to the gardens ‘conducted by a Relation of ours, George Evelyn’ and carried out by his brother at ‘vast Expense’, were ‘finished whilst I was abroad’: Cited in Carola and Alistair Small ‘John Evelyn and the Garden of Epicurus’, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 60 (1997), p. 214. Even through the mists of time, it seems unlikely that Evelyn would have forgotten a personal involvement in so large a project and this account does concur with the evidence in the correspondence. The conclusion that John Evelyn’s role was significant, if only advisory, remains valid.



**Figure 48 View of Wotton with the garden, grotto and environs**  
[by John Evelyn?][1650s?] BL, Evelyn, Add. 78610H



**Figure 49 Wotton in Surrey as in the yeare 16[..]**  
[by John Evelyn][1650s] BL, Evelyn, Add. 78610F



**Figure 50 'Wotton in Surrey, The house of Geo: Evelyn Esq.' by John Evelyn, 1653**  
BL, Evelyn, Add. 78610G

These show precisely the classical Italianate layout of the garden: 'I have resolved the plott for a garden where in the middle I will have a [?piscine] with water running and in the middle [...] some device of waterworks.'<sup>43</sup> We can clearly see the grotto with its classical pillars - which incidentally can still be seen at Wotton today - as well as steps, arches and walls and the levelled terrace which offers a fantastic vantage point over the whole garden to the house. The vista is equally impressive from the viewpoint of the house looking up the terraces to the mount. Comparison with the earlier drawings of the house and surrounding area show that this garden was a complete reworking of the original. It was a huge and expensive undertaking, literally moving mountains to redirect water courses that were in close proximity to the house, to fill in the moat, to level the garden and

---

<sup>43</sup>BL, Evelyn, Add. 78303, GE to JE ?1651

to build the terraced mount at the southern end of the garden.<sup>44</sup> The mount was planted with rows of trees; the pools were filled with running water; steps, arches and the grotto, complete with a statue of Venus, were built. The result was an unmistakably Italianate garden, the impact of which Evelyn was in no doubt:

I should speake much of the Gardens, Fountaines and Groves that adorne it were they not as generally knowne to be amongst the most magnificent that England afforded [...] and which indeede gave one of the first examples to that elegancy since so much in vogue and followd, for the managing of their Waters and other elegancies of that nature.<sup>45</sup>

As has been discussed elsewhere, elements of Italianate gardens had been gradually introduced into gardens around England, as noted for instance in the examples of Trentham Hall and Halland House. However, what appears to be represented at Wotton is the wholesale remodelling of a garden into a new style, such as that represented in paintings such as the gardens of the house at Llanerch in Denbighshire or in the engraving of Ingestre Hall from Robert Plot's *Staffordshire*, a fashion which Evelyn claims was first seen at Wotton.<sup>46</sup> Whether this somewhat immodest claim is true or not, the fact is that Italian and classical influences were by this time simply one of a number of styles inspiring English garden design. As noted previously, fashions from Renaissance Italy took a long time to take hold in England, and it seems that by the time they did, new ideas were afoot. It could be argued that gardens such as those at Wotton were by now slightly anachronistic as new influences from around the continent, particularly France and Holland, were travelling much more quickly and taking their place in English garden design, a fact amply demonstrated by John Evelyn himself in the creation of his garden at Sayes Court.

---

<sup>44</sup> Evelyn explains the engineering involved here in his *Diary*, III, p. 61

<sup>45</sup> *Diary*, II, p. 4-5. Interestingly, and as has been noted in the cases of the other Italianate gardens in England, neither the drawings, the correspondence nor Evelyn's diary entries mention anything about plants or flowers.

<sup>46</sup> See **Figure 3**, p. 14 and **Figure 38**, p. 190



Having examined these two very different gardens in detail, what can now be added to our picture of the mid-seventeenth century garden from an examination of the papers of Sir Thomas Hanmer? What more can we learn about garden layouts and design, new gardening techniques, influences from abroad and the place of the ornamental flower garden?

As discussed elsewhere, the papers of Sir Thomas provide a wealth of information about how one gentleman gardener approached and carried out his gardening. In addition to the draft manuscripts of his *Garden Book*, there are also two small notebooks kept by Hanmer, annotated in various places with dates which allow us to place them with a degree of certainty to between 1654 and 1657. The first memorandum book is randomly arranged and is in two parts - each beginning from either end of the book.<sup>47</sup> The first part concerns accounts, bills, debts and various ‘notes to self’, while the second part is exclusively concerned with garden notes. There are many lists of plants, including planting plans for his gardens, plants that Hanmer has purchased from various nurserymen both in England and in France, with a note of the prices paid and plants he has given to and received from various friends and relatives.<sup>48</sup> It also contains notes gathered from various people about plant care and maintenance which together with the planting plans are of particular relevance to this chapter. The second notebook, covering the same time period and dedicated exclusively to garden notes, appears to be a ‘tidied up’ version of the first, with neat headings and a lot of blank pages in between, indicating perhaps an intention to fill these in at a later date as he gathered more information.<sup>49</sup> It seems a reasonable assumption

---

<sup>47</sup> NLW, Bettisfield 1663

<sup>48</sup> These trade and exchange networks will be examined more fully in Chapter 4

<sup>49</sup> NLW, Bettisfield 1666

that this was an initial attempt to channel his notes and thoughts into some kind of order with a view to compiling his garden book.

In addition, amongst the bundle of unbound papers which includes one of the manuscript versions of his *Garden Book* is an essay written by Hanmer, very likely intended as a preface, which also repays close attention.<sup>50</sup> As well as setting out his reasons for writing his book and the contents therein, he gives an account of the current state of gardening, comparing it with how things have changed since his father's time – a period which of course would have been contemporaneous with the gardens examined so far from earlier in the century. He observes for instance that the wealthy nowadays are no longer satisfied with 'good houses, Parkes, handsome avenues and issues to and from their dwellings' and instead are turning their attention to 'very costly embellishments of their Gardens Orchards and Walkes' noting that 'the whole designe or laying out of our garden grounds are much different from what our fathers used'. Hanmer then goes on to give a detailed description of how gardens apparently looked, an account that has been much studied and quoted by garden historians as being a definitive (not to say almost unique) description of a mid-seventeenth-century garden.<sup>51</sup> However, it soon becomes apparent that he is neither describing his own garden nor indeed any other gardens that he knows in Wales, so it does beg the question as to where this description of fashionable gardens is coming from. Closer examination reveals the likelihood that at times at least he is describing fashions he had seen in French gardens: he makes references for instance to parterres 'as the French call them', and Compartements, 'as they call them'. He describes 'great grounds', divided into

---

<sup>50</sup> NLW, Bettisfield 1667. A full transcript of this essay appears as Appendix 4.

<sup>51</sup> See esp. Duthie, 'Some Seventeenth-Century Flower Gardens', pp. 77-102

three sections: the parterre next to the house, compartments filled with knots, flowers, grasswork, dwarf trees and topiary beyond this, with labyrinths, walks and tall trees furthest from the house, all embellished with fountains, grottos, statues and so on. He also describes how the parterres are cut out into ‘Embroidery of flowers, beasts, birds and feuillages [...] filled with severall coloured sands and dust with much art, [and completely unlike Hanmer’s own garden] with but few flowers’. It becomes very clear at this point that Hanmer is describing the layout of gardens that belong to ‘someone else’ – ‘they’ – and as suggested above it is likely that this is the kind of garden he may have seen in France and elsewhere on the Continent.<sup>52</sup> The fact is that Hanmer makes a clear distinction between ‘these large groundes’ which ‘cannot well be less than two or three hundred yards in length’ and the smaller garden, presumably such as his own, which will suffice ‘most gentlemen’, comprising a square or oblong plot of only fifty or sixty yards, divided perhaps into two or four knots or compartments.<sup>53</sup>

That such gardens fall outside of his own practical experience becomes even more obvious when we consider a letter written by Hanmer to John Evelyn in 1668 in which he states:

In answer to [y]our desire of being enformed what gardens there are in Wales [...] I know not of any noble ones [...] Many gentlemen [...] have pretty handsome little groundes but nobody hath ventured upon large spacious ones with costly fountains [...] or great parterres.<sup>54</sup>

---

<sup>52</sup> This view is echoed by Roy Strong who suggests that Hanmer was describing elements of the French garden style that was to be the dominant influence in England after 1660: Strong, *The Artist and the Garden*, p. 156 and by Duthie, ‘Some Seventeenth-Century Flower Gardens’, p. 83

<sup>53</sup> This advice is reiterated by John Rea who suggested that 20 yards square was a sufficient size for the flower garden of a gentleman, 30 square yards for a nobleman: Duthie, ‘Some Seventeenth-Century Flower Gardens’, p. 82, and although there is little indication of the actual dimensions, is reminiscent too of the modest garden laid out by Thomas Temple at Burton Dassett.

<sup>54</sup> Cited in Robinson, ‘New Light on Sir Thomas Hanmer’, p. 6

All this presents somewhat of a conundrum. On the one hand, Hanmer begins this preface from an absolutely personal viewpoint, with specific references for instance to ‘our late Warr’, setting out precisely why he is writing this book and what it will and will not contain. However, he then moves on to this more general description of knots and parterres, as if they are nothing to do with him, but complying with a general perception of what such gardens looked like, even though, as the letter above indicates, he does not know of any! It is therefore difficult to escape the conclusion that the fashionable gardens Hanmer describes are those that he has seen in France, or possibly read about in books which, as has been discussed at length, were often French in origin. What is clear is that this is not a description of his own garden or gardens in his local area. In our search to uncover the reality of gentry gardens in rural England then, we must approach such evidence with caution.

More helpful are a number of descriptions of planting in Hanmer’s own gardens, the most detailed of which is a manuscript headed ‘Flowers in the Great Garden December 1660. Bettisf.’, supplemented by a further description of the ‘Fruit Trees in the Great Garden at Bettisfield 1660’.<sup>55</sup> Here he describes precisely what flowers were planted in how many rows in each bed within the garden.<sup>56</sup> The beds themselves are ‘boarded’ with paths in between, and set ‘in the midst of the boarded knot’.<sup>57</sup> This arrangement complies to a degree with the knots or quarters that Hanmer describes in his preface which are no longer, as they were in his father’s time,

hedg’d about with privet, rosemary or other tall hearbs which hide the  
prospect of the worke [...] all is now commonly [...] layd open and

---

<sup>55</sup> Both these MSS are part of Bettisfield 1667

<sup>56</sup> NLW, Bettisfield 1667

<sup>57</sup> As discussed elsewhere, the term ‘knot’ was used to described any kind of bordered, geometric plot or ‘quarter’ and was not necessarily the same as the intricate knots Hanmer describes in his preface.

exposed to the view of the chambers and the knotts and borders upheld only with very low coloured boards, stone or tile.

Hanmer's concern then is how to best display the flowers planted in his garden, for them to be open and exposed rather than hidden within hedges. There seem to be at least four central beds, each with thirteen rows or 'ranks' as he calls them, of four different varieties of flowers, with further beds 'besides the four little middle ones' and more borders under the walls. Another account details the planting of tender fruit trees, including apricot, peach, cherry and plum, around the walls of the Great Garden, noting varieties, provenance and the precise location of each tree. There are no apples or pears, but these presumably were grown in the adjacent orchard which is also referred to here. The description of the flower garden contains no reference at all to the intricate knots and parterres described in his preface.

Having said all this, it must be remembered that these notes were not for public consumption, but for Hanmer's own personal records, a practice which he recommends in his book:

having set five or six rootes in a gutter or ranke, with the points upwards, to cover them immediately two or three inches over, and soe proceed to the next ranke, writing downe in your Memoriall booke the name of every flower, and how it stands in each ranke, first, seconde, third, etc.<sup>58</sup>

In addition to these two manuscripts, Hanmer also kept similar notes in his memorandum book on two other gardens with which he was involved, at his mother's home in Haulton, near Bettisfield and at his home in Lewsham [Lewisham], near London. The planting of these gardens has thus far passed without comment from garden historians, but there is a

---

<sup>58</sup> *Garden Book*, p. 23

document which records an agreement, dated 24<sup>th</sup> January 1652, between Sir Thomas Hanmer and Thomas Price, a carpenter, to ‘pale about the new garden at Haulton in the new orchard where the house stands’<sup>59</sup> and the notebooks contain planting plans for both this garden and the one at Lewisham. On page 43 there is a list, dated September 1654, entitled ‘My flowers at Haulton’. There is not as much detail regarding the garden as there is for Bettisfield, but there appear to be at least four beds containing 42 separately named plants. Further into the notebook is another entry, dated 11 October 1656 and headed ‘Lewsh.’, followed by named varieties of plants set out in rows across the page. These have been annotated with comments such as ‘very good flower’ or ‘bore not’, clearly added at a later date.<sup>60</sup> Some entries are deleted with a large cross – perhaps these varieties failed?

These detailed notes reveal this as one way in which Hanmer accumulated his own knowledge, but as well as plant lists, he also used his notebooks to record advice received from various people about the care of plants. He notes for instance Monsieur Picot’s advice on the best time to plant tulip bulbs, the results of John Rose’s experiments on how best to protect plants from the frosts and his advice on how to sow ‘beares eares’ seeds.<sup>61</sup> This information eventually formed the basis of the advice on plant care and maintenance which appeared in the *Garden Book*. Here Hanmer offers conventional advice on soils and composts, watering, propagation, selecting and sowing seed, planting and so on - although it is clear from the way he writes that he is offering readers the benefit of his own experience. However, other subjects upon which he chooses to write demonstrate his own particular problems and concerns. He offers advice for instance on how to keep cats off

---

<sup>59</sup> NLW, Bettisfield 925

<sup>60</sup> NLW, Bettisfield 1663, pp. 73, 74

<sup>61</sup> *Auricula ursi*, although Hanmer always refers to them as ‘beares eares’.

newly dug soil as ‘they delight to scrape in it, and urine and dung upon it’ (as anyone who lives next door to a cat-owner will testify!) – he suggests pinning down nets over freshly sown or newly planted beds. As a definitive sign of the times, he adds a paragraph on ‘How to Packe up Rootes and send them to Remote Places’ – for a man who both sends and receives plants from as far afield as France, this is obviously a crucial concern.<sup>62</sup>

However, the section which demonstrates more clearly than any other the techniques and practices which were taking place in the mid-seventeenth century is perhaps Hanmer’s advice on the ‘Houseing and Covering of Plants’.<sup>63</sup> Methods of protecting tender plants in the earlier part of the century have been discussed at length in this chapter, but Hanmer’s comments repay further consideration. The first factor to note is that by this time, the range of rare and exotic plants available to gardeners in England was constantly becoming much wider and the choice much greater. As well as the range of flowers discussed above, Hanmer, like Evelyn, is particularly taken with evergreen plants or ‘Greenes’ as he calls them, because ‘being never wholly unclothed of their sweet and beautifull leaves [they are] therefore much esteem’d by us’.<sup>64</sup> Many of these plants required protection over the winter:

All such as come newly to us out of the Indyes or other Hot countreys, and many other flowers which wee have not had long here, must be brought into a house in November and continue there ‘till March or Aprill’.<sup>65</sup>

It would seem that the provision of such a house was fairly common practice by this time: ‘all that are curious in plants have a roome purposely for this use adjoyning to their garden’ he notes, but Hanmer also offers detailed instruction on how this house should be

---

<sup>62</sup> *Garden Book*, p. 16, 15

<sup>63</sup> *Garden Book*, p. 9

<sup>64</sup> Hanmer’s essay on gardening, Bettisfield 1667; or see Appendix 4

<sup>65</sup> NLW, Bettisfield 21753 B

constructed, ‘otherwise it will kill more plants than it will preserve’.<sup>66</sup> Whereas it had long been understood that plants from foreign climates need to be kept in a warm environment and protected from harsh elements such as violent rain, frost and snow, what was apparently now recognised was that plants ‘will perish for want of ayre (without which nothing can live), as certainly as with cold’.<sup>67</sup> The room should therefore be large and high, so that the plants do not become ‘choked with being constantly there’ and should be well provided with large, south-facing windows and doors which should be opened on mild days, to allow in the air, but must be shut fast in the cold and frost.<sup>68</sup> The additional advantage of large south-facing windows was of course that during the daytime they would trap whatever warmth was available from the winter sun and of course, a completely unrecognised but crucial benefit was that large south-facing windows also allowed in light - essential to healthy plant life.<sup>69</sup>

So although often through little more than a process of trial and error, knowledge of and techniques for cultivating exotic plants had certainly moved on since John Parkinson had more or less dismissed the idea of hot stoves as a waste of time in the preservation of

---

<sup>66</sup> *Garden Book*, p. 9. All the following references to the over-wintering of plants are taken from here.

<sup>67</sup> This was something not appreciated earlier in the century, when Markham was recommending completely wrapping plants up to protect them and John Parkinson was observing that this simply didn’t work, even though he clearly did not know why.

<sup>68</sup> *Garden Book*, p. 9. Hanmer’s notebook indicates that he probably got this information initially from his friend and fellow-gardener John Rose, who, Hanmer notes under a section headed ‘Roses experiments’, ‘saith oranges die most in England for want of aire in temperate wynter weather and that wyndowes doe not let in aire enough, but great doores’: NLW, Bettisfield 1663. This replenishing of fresh air into the room would certainly have increased the plants’ chances of survival, because although this was not properly understood at the time, we now know that plants do in a sense ‘breathe’ and that keeping them in an enclosed environment will eventually exhaust the supply of essential carbon dioxide. Thirty years later John Evelyn was still addressing this problem. He too recognised that plants needed to breathe (‘as I presume to call it’ he adds in parenthesis, clearly unsure of the correct term), and came up with an ingenious method of keeping a constant supply of fresh warm air circulating in a glass house, using an external stove and pipes to transfer the heat inside: (Mark Laird ‘The Greenhouse and the Great Storm of 1703 in the life of John Evelyn and his Contemporaries’, *GH* 34:2 (2006), 153-173 (p.158). In the meantime, Hanmer’s doors and windows went some way towards solving this problem.

<sup>69</sup> Again, it was Evelyn who appears to be the first person to recognise this, noting in his *Kalendarium Hortense* (1691) that ‘Light itself, next to Air, is of wonderful importance’.



tender plants, now making this a worthwhile exercise in which to invest time and money, as it seemed to have at least some chance of success.

It is clear from these documents however that Hanmer's main interest was in flowers, especially rare and costly flowers, for the ornamental garden.<sup>70</sup> Although the printed version of the book has no title, the other two manuscript versions are entitled 'Of a Flower Garden' and 'Of Flowers' respectively, reflecting Hanmer's preoccupation with this aspect of gardening. In his essay, presumed to be intended as a preface to the *Garden Book*, Hanmer states that it is to be concerned with 'choice Flowers, Trees and Plants' which are, according to Hanmer the 'chiefest ornaments' of a beautiful garden and his manuscript letters, notes and book all bear witness to the fact that this is a plantsman's garden: his advice is firmly rooted in his own experience and his love for and knowledge of the flowers and plants within it is clear. Although he plans to include advice on their 'preservation and increase', like Parkinson before him and for the same reasons, Hanmer purposely omits 'all fabulous secrets for altering colors and other strange improvements'. He only includes directions that are 'agreable to truth and good iterated experiments'. His book will contain descriptions of 'the best Flowers', the 'much-esteem'd' evergreens, ornamental trees and shrubs that 'may be admitted into Gardens' as well some 'common ones' to ensure flowers in all seasons.<sup>71</sup> The intensely personalised and particular nature of these descriptions would indicate that they reflected very closely the flowers in Hanmer's garden including tulips of infinite varieties (including one first grown at Bettisfield, *Tulipa*

---

<sup>70</sup> It should be said that although Hanmer doesn't write about any other part of his garden, we do know that there was an orchard at both Bettisfield and Haulton and it has to be assumed that there was also a kitchen garden: NLW, Bettisfield 1667, 'Fruit trees in the Great Garden at Bettisfield, 1660'; NLW, Bettisfield 925, 1165. It would seem that these utilitarian aspects were simply not his concern.

<sup>71</sup> NLW, Bettisfield 1667.

‘Agate Hanmer’<sup>72</sup>), narcissus, crown imperial, anemones, ranunculas, martagons and cyclamen to name but a few of the flowering bulbs, as well as gillyflowers, roses and another of his especial favourites, auriculas.<sup>73</sup> It is clear that tulips were also a particular passion – Hanmer refers to them as ‘the Queene of Bulbous plants’, but he considers them ‘now soe well knowne in England that [they need] no description’.<sup>74</sup> It is significant that Hanmer is clearly happy to include all these flowers in his garden, whether new, fashionable or otherwise, presumably reflecting his own personal preferences. It is also interesting to note that plants such as tulips, that were considered to be rare and exotic in the early years of the century, have now become commonplace.

In Sir Thomas then, we have an example of a gentleman gardener who appears to have taken on board the radical notions being advocated just thirty years earlier by John Parkinson, epitomising a legitimate and exclusive interest in the ornamental flower garden, whilst noting himself that this is a recent phenomenon. He observes that ‘now [...] some spare no charge amongst other things in procuring the rarest flowers and plants’. He notes that although the Italians and Germans and then the French and Dutch have been ‘diligent enquirers and collectors of [...] rarities’ for some years past, it is only recently that this habit has come to England. The novelty of these ideas is reiterated a number of times: ‘this way of beautifying ... comes apace into fashion’ he writes, gardeners are unfamiliar with these plants and have not caught up with the new ways, ‘being for the most part inexpert and dull’ and interestingly, Hanmer specifically dates these changes to the years since the

---

<sup>72</sup> *Garden Book*, Introduction, p. xxi

<sup>73</sup> For instance, he includes remarks such as ‘it came up with mee 1660 in the end of January’: *Garden Book*, p. 79; but if a variety of plant is outside of his experience, he says so: ‘in Gerard there are two other sorts mentioned which I have not seene’ (p. 52) and he tells us that his full list of varieties of iris is from Monsieur Moryn’s printed catalogue (p. 38).

<sup>74</sup> *Garden Book*, p. 18

war - that is, very recently.<sup>75</sup> From our reading of Parkinson, this presents a slight contradiction, as he was saying much the same thing thirty years earlier, but as has been shown, Hanmer's book is both practical and personal, and his experience of living in France and then in the remote Welsh borders will have been quite different from Parkinson's experience of living throughout his working life in London, where these changes will have been much more immediate and obvious. Also, Parkinson was very much introducing his readers to a new idea, whereas by Hanmer's time, and as we have already noted in the example of Sayes Court, the idea of a ornamental garden embellished with choice flowers had clearly taken hold and was becoming accepted practice.

From this study of the gardens of Evelyn and Hanmer, what can be concluded then about the state of gardening on the eve of the Restoration? In terms of the innovations and trends identified earlier in the century, it would seem that there is a consolidation and normalisation of ideas and practices. Although nothing distinctively new had happened in the last thirty years (which given the political upheavals is hardly surprising), nevertheless ideas that were new and innovative in Parkinson's London, in particular the flowering of the ornamental garden as a distinct and acceptable area of gardening, now appear to have been absorbed into normal practice. As we have seen, Hanmer demonstrates an exclusive and unashamed pleasure in his ornamental flower garden. Exotic plants continued to be imported in ever increasing varieties and methods of caring for them had advanced, even if only through trial and error. As Parkinson predicted, the importing of spring-flowering bulbs, and now more particularly the evergreens that both Evelyn and Hanmer were so taken with, 'make a Garden of delight even in the winter time'.<sup>76</sup> At the same time, we also

---

<sup>75</sup> NLW, Bettisfield 1667

<sup>76</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 8

note that Evelyn in particular is also looking forward, introducing innovative new French and Dutch influenced elements into his garden which were to become increasingly fashionable in England towards the end of the century.

However, what is more difficult to ascertain from such disparate, yet particular evidence is how representative the gardens discussed in this chapter actually were of the generality of early- to mid-seventeenth century gardens. Is it, in fact, possible to say with any degree of certainty what a 'typical' garden was? Ruth Duthie asserts for instance that, because he was a true plant lover, Hanmer's garden 'cannot be regarded as typical for a gentleman of the period'. Roy Strong states, admittedly less categorically, that Hanmer's garden was, 'one feels, exceptional'.<sup>77</sup> John Evelyn's subsequent horticultural reputation and, I suspect, the fact that such a detailed plan of his garden is still extant, have also elevated Sayes Court to the realms of the exception rather than the rule. However, just because this extant evidence from a handful of gardens happens to be known to us, it still gives us little indication as to whether or not these were representative of the vast majority of gardens about which, of course, we know nothing at all. Given on the one hand the paucity of specific evidence of other gardens, and on the other, the very particular nature of evidence about the gardens studied here, it is in fact extremely difficult to come to any conclusion at all about what was typical and what was exceptional.

What the study of these gardens *does* demonstrate however is a reflection of the personal tastes, experiences, interests, likes and dislikes of their owners: George Evelyn was clearly taken by all things Italian and engaged his brother's expertise to help him create such a

---

<sup>77</sup> Duthie, 'Some Seventeenth-Century Flower Gardens', p.77; Strong, *The Artist in the Garden*, p. 155

garden at Wotton; John Evelyn's own garden reflected his travels in Holland and France as well as his well-documented interest in the new science; Sir Thomas Hanmer created his garden in order to best display the flowers that he loved, and although he was aware of costly embellishments, new fashions and elaborate designs, these were not his interest. Sir John Oglander indulged in expensive flowers and Sir Richard Leveson in an expensive remodelling possibly inspired by other stylish gardens known to him, while Sir Thomas Temple preferred his old-fashioned parlour garden of sweet-smelling flowers. So whilst it has proved almost impossible make generalisations about a typical garden of the time, from the evidence presented here it is possible to conclude that it had at least as much to do with individual taste and circumstances than with following any specific trend. It must be remembered that it would be well into the following century before a truly 'English' style of gardening was to emerge.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### NETWORKS AND EXCHANGES

‘The very stuff of the history of gardening [...] consists largely of plants that have been displaced and transplanted to new situations.’<sup>1</sup>

The last two chapters have identified and discussed at length changes in gardening practices that occurred in early modern England. This chapter will now examine some of the reasons why these changes may have occurred and what mechanisms for the exchange of plants, knowledge and ideas developed during this period which allowed them to happen. Attention will focus on one of the central but ephemeral and therefore somewhat elusive elements of gardens and gardening and that is of course, the plants. How were plants - whether native or from across the seas - actually obtained by gardeners for their gardens? Where were they being bought? How much did they cost? How were they being exchanged? What changes occurred during the period? This chapter will attempt to answer some of these questions by examining the growth of the plant trade during the period, from the informal networks that allowed the commercial and non-commercial exchange of native plants from Medieval times, to the changes that inevitably followed as interest in and demand for rare and exotic plants from the new world and the continent increased along with the development of global trade networks that enabled and facilitated this demand. As the development of a fully-fledged commercial nursery trade only really began to take hold in the middle of the seventeenth century,<sup>2</sup> much of the focus of this chapter will be on the nascent development of this trade as seen through the practices of gardeners of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

---

<sup>1</sup> Penelope Hobhouse, *Plants in Garden History* (London: Pavilion, 1992), p. 6

<sup>2</sup> Harvey, *Early Nurserymen*, p. 5

At the same time, another less well-documented aspect of these exchanges is revealed and that is the inevitable dissemination of information and ideas that must have accompanied it. We are reminded that it was not just plants but also horticultural knowledge and experience, gathered at home and abroad, that were being exchanged amongst networks of fellow garden-enthusiasts, whether friends, acquaintances, correspondents or nurserymen.



**Figure 51 Carnations and Gilloflowers  
from Parkinson's *Paradisi in Sole***

#### 4.1 ‘Those that are called usually English flowers’: Commercial and non-commercial exchange of native plants

As has already been alluded to in Chapter 3, for the ordinary gardener concerned with growing vegetables, fruit and herbs for the household, the primary means of obtaining new plants was to raise them himself by collecting, saving and sowing seed, propagating slips or cuttings, grafting fruit trees and so on. Evelyn’s nursery garden at Sayes Court has already been discussed and the Halland House accounts also make several references to ‘the nursery’, an area clearly used for raising plants: payments are noted to Clark for half a day grafting cherries in the nursery’ and again to ‘Clark for gathering of crabstocks and potting them in the nursery’ – these presumably are root stocks destined for the grafting of apple trees in the orchard.<sup>3</sup> Elsewhere a payment is recorded for ‘gathering [3550] quicksetts for the orchard’.<sup>4</sup> It would seem from entries such as these that, far from being purchased, the crabstocks and quicksets were either being gathered from the countryside or possibly from stock trees on site - Sir Thomas Temple mentions the keeping of stocks for this purpose at Burton Dassett.<sup>5</sup> In the same way, on another occasion Pelham’s gardener is paid 10*d* for the ‘gathering of 100 honeysuckells for the garden’, while weeding women are paid 5*d* a day for ‘gathering of violetts and setting of them’, timely reminders that many common garden plants were simply domesticated native plants found in the wild and brought into the garden.<sup>6</sup> Contemporary garden writers offered advice on the ‘encrease’ of flowers and plants by setting slips, rooted cuttings, offsets from bulbs and of course

---

<sup>3</sup> BL, Pelham, Add. 33147, fols 141<sup>v</sup>, 163<sup>v</sup>. A root stock is the lower part of a plant used in grafting onto which the upper part, or scion, is grafted. Root stocks are of hardy, vigorous varieties – such as here in the case of crab apple stocks – which grow naturally in the wild, to which less vigorous cultivars are then grafted in order to help them establish and grow successfully.

<sup>4</sup> BL, Pelham, Add. 33147, fol. 238<sup>v</sup>. Quicksets are cuttings or young plants used for making hedges, usually hawthorn, blackthorn or whitethorn. Sir Thomas Temple also refers to them as ‘Thorne settes’: HL, Temple MSS, STT2282.

<sup>5</sup> See for instance HL, Temple MSS, STT2143, STT2282.

<sup>6</sup> BL, Pelham, Add 33147, fols 141<sup>v</sup>, 122; Campbell-Culver, *The Origin of Plants*, p. 127



collecting and sowing seed - the fact is that by these methods a gardener could populate his garden with many vegetables, fruits, herbs and flowers for free.

But there were alternatives. It is equally clear from household accounts and anecdotal evidence in other manuscript records that plants and seeds were also purchased and sold, and there are indications that some form of informal commercial horticultural networks had been in existence since Medieval times. The most comprehensive study of this subject was carried out by John Harvey in the early 1970s in two books *Early Gardening Catalogues* (1972) and *Early Nurserymen* (1974) where he explores available evidence of the burgeoning nursery trade which he says only really began to flourish on a large scale in the second half of the seventeenth century. However, although he concludes that there was little in the way of an organised commercial plant trade in England prior to 1660, there is plenty of evidence, much of it cited by Harvey himself, that some kind of trade in plants had been going on since at least the thirteenth century, the supply of plants lying ‘undoubtedly [...] in the hands of the professional gardeners’.<sup>7</sup> Long before the specialised trade of the nurseryman emerged, it was the gardener who had the expert knowledge of plants, producing seeds, grafts and surplus seedlings from their plants and who in turn required plants to furnish the gardens and orchards of their masters. During the reign of Edward 1, records show that in 1275, a William Gardiner was paid for a considerable variety of plants for the King’s gardens and orchards, including cherry trees, oziers<sup>8</sup>, quinces, peach trees and gooseberry bushes and payments to other individuals for plants including lily bulbs, peony roots and various seeds indicate that there must have been some

---

<sup>7</sup> Harvey, *Early Gardening Catalogues*, p. 7; *Early Nurserymen*, p. 27

<sup>8</sup> Ozier = willow

kind of significant plant trade in Westminster at this time.<sup>9</sup> The following century, in 1345, a petition was presented to the Mayor of London on behalf of the gardeners of the city, demanding that they ‘may stand in peace in the same place where they have been wont in times of old [...] there to sell the garden produce of their said masters, and make their profit, as heretofore they have been in their wont to do’.<sup>10</sup> And it was not just in London that there is evidence of commercial horticulture: in 1322, Gerard ‘le fruter’ and in 1336, Philip ‘le fruter’ both took up the freedom to trade in the City of York.<sup>11</sup>

Moving into the early sixteenth century, C. Paul Christianson’s detailed study of accounts relating to the gardens of Tudor London reveals records which not only indicate the purchase of plants for the King’s garden at Hampton Court and Cardinal Wolsey’s garden at York Place, but also records the names of local suppliers. More complicated transactions include the payment of 10s 8d to one Ed Gryffith to spend eight days riding to Buckinghamshire and back in order to purchase sixty-seven apple trees. These were later delivered to London at a further cost of 6d each.<sup>12</sup> Further evidence suggests that by this time gardeners were also working independently, hiring out their services for fixed periods of time as well as apparently selling seeds, herb and flower plants from their own gardens.<sup>13</sup> One specific example of such a gardener/plant supplier is found in the person of Henry Russell who was employed as an experienced gardener at the highest rate of pay to work in the Bridge House gardens (an administrative centre located at the south end of

---

<sup>9</sup> Harvey, *Early Nurserymen*, p. 40

<sup>10</sup> Charles Welch, *History of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners* (London, 1900), p. 18. Although in later centuries it is important to make a distinction between the trade of the nurserymen who sold living plants and the trade of the market gardener who sold garden produce, suffice to note here that even in these early days there is evidence of a healthy and significant horticultural trade.

<sup>11</sup> Harvey, *Early Gardening Catalogues*, p. 2

<sup>12</sup> Christianson, *The Riverside Gardens of Thomas More’s London*, pp. 111-2

<sup>13</sup> Christianson, *The Riverside Gardens of Thomas More’s London*, p. 118

London Bridge) but who also appears in the records again as a supplier of rosemary and lavender plants for the King's garden and of three loads of sand for his bowling alley.<sup>14</sup> It would appear from this that the independent gardener was not just a potential supplier of plants, but also of other specialist garden materials. Finally, judging by the appearance of payments for items such as bill hooks, spades, knives and wheelbarrows, there was also a reliable source of specialist tools for the gardener. Although details are scant, this kind of anecdotal evidence does point convincingly to an increasing commercialisation of horticulture during the early decades of the sixteenth century.

Turning now to the period which is the subject of this thesis, similar evidence emerges from the documentary sources to indicate that much of the trade in plants, such as it was, continued to be carried out at a local level, but although there is a reasonable amount of evidence from accounts that plants and seeds were being purchased, details of who was supplying them and where they were being grown is more difficult to ascertain. The accounts of Edward Radcliffe, 6th Earl of Sussex at Gorhambury in Hertfordshire, for instance, show a payment made on 4th March 1638 of 8s for 400 cabbage plants and another one-off payment of £1 7s 6d made later the same month for 'garden seeds'.<sup>15</sup> The cucumber, carrot, turnip and mustard seeds, the peas and beans for sowing and the hundreds of cabbage plants purchased for the Leyhill and Nunwell households have already been mentioned, but such records still offer no clues as to where these items were being purchased. However, the Halland House accounts are a little more enlightening in

---

<sup>14</sup> Christianson, *The Riverside Gardens of Thomas More's London*, p. 113; Harvey, *Early Nurserymen*, p. 27

<sup>15</sup> Munby, *Early Stuart Household Accounts*, pp. 167, 168. We can safely assume that these seeds, although unspecified, were vegetable seeds as the sum totals for the year itemise 'Digging the kitchen garden seeds and plants £4 11s 6d': Munby, p. 194. These are large sums of money given that payments for seeds are normally measured in pennies, but it is likely that this may represent the main supply for the year as the majority of the kitchen garden produce would have been sown around this time, as dictated by experience of the English climate and as advised in gardening manuals.

this regard as they offer additional information over and above the price paid. Cabbage plants and garden seeds are obtained from the nearby market town of Lewes and in another entry, a Mr Abel of Lewes has provided six rose plants. Thomas the gardener is paid for seeds he brought from London and on other occasions Mister Foster, Mr Ills, William Gardener and John Grove are all paid for seeds, cabbage and artichoke plants respectively. Mr Ills also supplied a garden spade for 4s.<sup>16</sup> Although information is hardly overwhelming, this evidence would seem to lend weight at least to the idea that common seeds, plants and garden tools were bought and sold locally through a network of gardeners working either independently or employed on estates such as Halland. The reference to Thomas the gardener fetching seeds from London would suggest that it is the gardener's responsibility to source the supplies of seeds and plants. This idea is borne out in other evidence: in a letter to his estate steward Harry Rose, Sir Thomas Temple suggests he 'deale with Richard [the gardener] who both for peares & Apple stockes can best furnish me', although we later learn that this source of supply fails as the less fortunate Richard 'wrighteth to me that his Abricot trees are dead & so cannot serve my turne'.<sup>17</sup> On John Oglander's Nunwell estate, payments are recorded in February 1629 'To Jacob for Gardeninge and seedes' and to 'Smyth for worke and plants', while at Llantrythyd, Sir Thomas Aubrey's estate in South Wales, there is a similar note of a payment 'To Jenkin for plants'.<sup>18</sup> At Trentham Hall the gardener, John Gervace (Jarvis), is paid on a number of occasions for 'setts for the Court', oziers, willows and turnip seeds.<sup>19</sup> It is difficult to escape the conclusion here that Jacob, Smyth, Jenkin and Gervace, all estate workers, were

---

<sup>16</sup> BL, Pelham, Add. 33147, fols 16, 89, 10, 17, 71, 89, 78<sup>v</sup>, 130, 89.

<sup>17</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2289, STT2296

<sup>18</sup> IOWRO, OG/AA/28; Bowen, *The Household Accounts of Sir Thomas Aubrey*, p. 73

<sup>19</sup> SRO, D593/R/1/2

either raising these plants and seeds themselves or obtaining them from a third party in order to sell them on to their employers.

Quicksets, used mainly for hedging, and where they are not raised on the estate as in the case of Halland House or Burton Dassett, always appear to be supplied in vast quantities and are often priced by the hundred. At Trentham Hall over the winter of 1635, there are frequent payments for ‘setts’ at the rate of 6*d* per hundred. Some, as noted above, are supplied by Gervace the gardener, but most payments are made to one Roger Whilton, who does not appear anywhere else in the accounts apart from in this context of the purchase of quicksets, so it could be assumed that he was an independent supplier. Thousands of quicksets and oziers were purchased and planted around the new garden and grounds at Trentham that winter. In the same year, at Llantrithyd in South Wales, a total of 3,600 plants and quicksets were purchased for planting on the estate for a total of 9*s*.<sup>20</sup> Another source of supply may have been from the sale of surplus stocks from neighbouring estates. In a letter to his estate steward Harry Rose, Sir Thomas Temple requests Rose to send him ‘a Coppye of your Wood booke’ and then asks that he ‘make a new one to begin as soone as you can sell any hedges and willowes to begin from the year 1631’.<sup>21</sup> Whilst it is unlikely of course that the Temple estate was supplying Trentham Hall, it does nevertheless present another plausible possibility concerning the general commercial exchange of such plants.

---

<sup>20</sup> SRO, D593/R/1/2; Bowen, *The Household Accounts of Sir Thomas Aubrey*, p. 124. It might seem remarkable that such large numbers of plants as these were apparently so easily and cheaply available, but in rural areas it is possible to conceive of gathering cuttings of easily rooting plants such as willow and hawthorn without too much difficulty and a full size stock tree or existing hedge could presumably provide hundreds of cuttings or sets. All that the independent supplier would require is a plot of land in which to root the cuttings and they would be ready for selling on within the year.

<sup>21</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2276

Evidence also shows that there was a demand for larger trees, and particularly fruit trees, for the gardens of the gentry estates and that these trees, if not available locally, were being transported long distances in order to grace the gardens of their owners. In 1645, the Halland household accounts reveal that Philip is paid the not inconsiderable sum of £2 for ‘23 trees that he bought at Pettworth’ as well as a further 6s 6d ‘for his charges going thether & back againe for those trees and for his horses’.<sup>22</sup> However, the household accounts of Sir Thomas Aubery of Llantrithyd present a more interesting case in point. On 6th March 1623, a payment of 3s 10d is recorded ‘For carriage of the trees from London’ followed by a further payment of 5s ‘Geven unto Richard Herberts servant whome he sent hether to plant the trees that was sent from Londone’.<sup>23</sup> A separate list of husbandry expenses for the same date indicates a total of 45s 6d paid for four nectarines, one cherry and twenty two other trees. It must be assumed that these are the same trees sent from London.<sup>24</sup> We are not told how the trees were transported, but it is likely that they will have been sent by sea which, although at this time, moving goods by water was often more efficient than bringing them overland, this operation still would not have been easy, quick or inexpensive.<sup>25</sup> However, as this presumably was the only way to obtain such trees, apparently not available from local sources, it is indicative of the time, money and effort people were prepared to expend in obtaining what they wanted for their orchards and gardens. That these trees must have been something unusual is reiterated by the fact that a particular gardener has to be drafted in to plant them, the resident gardener at Llantrithyd perhaps not having the necessary skill to undertake this task.

---

<sup>22</sup> BL, Pelham, Add. 33147, fol. 141v

<sup>23</sup> Bowen, *The Household Accounts of Sir Thomas Aubrey*, p. 55

<sup>24</sup> Bowen, *The Household Accounts of Sir Thomas Aubrey*, p. 60

<sup>25</sup> John Chartres, *Internal Trade in England 1500-1700* (London, 1977), p. 42. In 1622, Sir Arthur Ingram had trees and roses shipped from London to Hull for his gardens at York and Sheriff Hutton: West Yorkshire Archive Service, WYL178/4, Ingram to John Matteson, 29 October 1622.

The documentary evidence provided in the Temple manuscripts offers further insightful information, revealing through the correspondence and memorandum books of Sir Thomas a thriving network of non-commercial exchange of plants and trees between friends, relations and other acquaintances. The vine cuttings from John Hall's garden at Stratford upon Avon, as recommended by Temple's sister-in-law have already been discussed at length, but once again they provide a timely case in point. News of Mr Hall's grapevine had travelled to Burton Dassett from Stratford via Sir Thomas' brother Peter Temple's wife. It would seem that Mr Hall and Sir Thomas Temple were not acquainted, but nevertheless Hall appears happy for Temple's gardener to take the cuttings. Whether thriving grape vines were scarce in the midlands, whether this was a particularly good variety or whether indeed money did change hands (although I suspect it did not) are all questions which are open to speculation, but the fact remains that here is evidence of one reliable source of good plants: other people's gardens. At the same time, techniques regarding the best way to plant the cuttings are passed on from Richard the Gardener via Sir Thomas to Harry Rose. Temple also suggests in the same letter to Rose that the vines are 'led up both upon walles & upon Tiles, whereupon it hath bin and is proved they doe best prosper', something he has seen himself in many places, again presumably in other people's gardens.<sup>26</sup> Sir Thomas also obtained fruit trees from a range of other such sources, including many from the gardens of other Temple estates. One entry in his memorandum book, dated in the autumn of 1630 records the getting of

from Miles Temple my Sonn [...] walnut [...] and quince trees of the best sorte; damsons from Bubnell;<sup>27</sup> Russett apples from Prescottt 2 trees, from Stow 2 trees, from Mr Peters orchard 2 trees, from Ball of

---

<sup>26</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2287

<sup>27</sup> Bubbenhall, another of the Temple estates: Nathaniel Alcock, *Warwickshire Grazier and London Skinner 1532-1555, The Account Book of Peter Temple and Thomas Heritage* (London: for the British Academy by the Oxford University Press, 1981), pp. 274, 234

Newport 2 trees and 2 [?peare] Russettes of pippins from Stow 2 trees.<sup>28</sup>

Ball of Newport appears to be some kind of a nurseryman, being mentioned at least four times by Sir Thomas, both as a practitioner of grafting and as a supplier of fruit trees.<sup>29</sup> From evidence elsewhere in the manuscripts we know that James Prescott is a gentleman acquaintance,<sup>30</sup> but the rest of the trees are received from various relations and other Temple estates. When Richard the gardener's promised apricot trees fail to materialise, Temple asks his daughter-in-law to get some trees - presumably from her own garden - 'of the sorte that have good rootes'.<sup>31</sup> On another occasion, Sir Thomas instructs Harry Rose to arrange for the 'Abricott tree [that] is planted at Kingsters house to be removed I would have it replanted at the Southend of my Parler'.<sup>32</sup> Whether this was a gift or an acquisition is impossible to ascertain!

Elsewhere Sir Thomas receives grafts of pear trees from his son-in-law Sir John Rous, who has in turn received these grafts from a Mr Symonds and which he has 'praised much'. Rous provides the grafts together with advice that he thinks they will do better grafted onto old stock rather than young.<sup>33</sup> Although Harry Rose is commissioned on a number of occasions to purchase plants 'I would have yow also buy one dozen of peare stockes & an other of Apple & Crabstockes',<sup>34</sup> it would seem that the majority of Sir Thomas's trees and plants are obtained for free from fellow garden owners, together with their recommendations regarding the best way to plant and graft the trees, or which varieties to

---

<sup>28</sup> HL, Temple MSS, ST38, fol. 31<sup>v</sup>

<sup>29</sup> HL, Temple MSS, ST38, fols 18<sup>v</sup>, 30<sup>v</sup>, 31<sup>v</sup>

<sup>30</sup> For instance, HL, Temple MSS, STT2146, STT2148, STT2300

<sup>31</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2296

<sup>32</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2289

<sup>33</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2285, STT2290

<sup>34</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2289



choose for the best flavour of fruit.<sup>35</sup> Although not recorded in these manuscripts, it is difficult to imagine that these arrangements were not reciprocal and it is almost certain that this exchange of plants and advice, most likely gained from experience, was common practice among gardeners and garden owners. Unfortunately, there is little evidence of this available to us, because where money did not change hands, transactions were rarely recorded and the dissemination of advice has, to a certain degree, to be assumed.

Further information regarding the free exchange of plants can be found in contemporary gardening books – Gerard and Parkinson both frequently refer to plants they have received from gardening friends and acquaintances all over England as well as from abroad. Gerard receives beet seeds from Master Leet, who brought them from abroad, which Gerard grows successfully in his own garden, passing on the seeds in turn to ‘the worshipful Gentleman Master John Nordon [...] which is his garden brought forth many other of beautifull colours.’<sup>36</sup> Parkinson refers to a Mistress Thomasin Tunstall who lives in Lancashire ‘who hath often sent mee up the rootes [of wild Ellebore] to London, which have borne fair flowers in my garden’ and of the 175 plants in his book for which he records their sources, thirty-six were gathered by himself, friends, gardeners or herbalists from the English countryside or from their gardens.<sup>37</sup> William Lawson makes a reference in his book to ‘that honourable Lady of Hackness’, Lady Hoby, and he is clearly familiar with her garden, describing how she has made provision for bees in the stone walls of her orchard.<sup>38</sup> From her diary, it is clear that Lady Hoby herself was a keen gardener, frequently noting time spent ‘busie in the Garden’, on one occasion noting that ‘I went into the Garden, and gave

---

<sup>35</sup> HL, Temple MSS, ST38, fol. 18v

<sup>36</sup> Gerard, *Herball*, pp. 251-2

<sup>37</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 348; Riddell, ‘John Parkinson’s Long Acre Garden’, p. 113

<sup>38</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, p. 55[89]

some hearbes unto a good wife of Erley for his [her] garden'.<sup>39</sup> The frequency of such anecdotal references would indicate that this free exchange of plants and knowledge was normal practice and that these kinds of informal arrangements continued in much the same way as they had done for centuries.

However, moving away from the Provinces and into the capital city of London, we see a different picture beginning to emerge. By 1600, London was the third largest city in Europe, its population had quadrupled in the past one hundred years and it was more than fifteen times larger than the next most populous cities in England and Wales. Its position on the River Thames ensured that it was of huge commercial importance, both as a centre of trade and as a centre of consumption. Expansion in world exploration and trade was bringing a range of exotic and luxury goods to England's shores through the City of London that had never been seen before and these of course included plants.<sup>40</sup> Their rarity made them objects of desire among plantsmen, garden enthusiasts and collectors alike, and in London at least, there is evidence of a burgeoning organised commercial nursery trade in the early seventeenth century, making it possible, as we have already seen, to buy specialist plants and trees not available in rural England.

We know from a variety of sources that there were commercial nurseries supplying fruit trees and other plants to gardeners in Elizabethan and early Stuart London. John Parkinson for instance, frequently refers to 'our Nursery Gardiners', although not necessarily in

---

<sup>39</sup> *The Private Life of an Elizabethan Lady: The Diary of Lady Margaret Hoby 1599-1605*, ed. by Joanna Moody (Stroud: Sutton, 1998), p. 14

<sup>40</sup> David Sacks, 'London's Dominion' in *Material London*, ed. by Orlin, pp. 20-54 (p. 22); Frederick J. Fisher, *London and the English Economy, 1500-1700*, ed. by P. J. Corfield and N. B. Harte (London: Hambledon Press, 1990), pp. 105-6

particularly complimentary terms: ‘scarce one of twentie of our Nurserie men doe sell the right, but give one for another: for it is an inherent qualitie almost hereditarie with most of them, to sell any man an ordinary fruit for whatsoever rare fruit he shall ask for: so little are they to be trusted’ [!].<sup>41</sup> Leaving aside for the moment this somewhat scathing attack on an entire profession, his remarks do nevertheless indicate that there were a significant number of nurserymen doing business in the London area with whom Parkinson was familiar, even if only by reputation. Elsewhere he comments that gentlemen who do not intend to keep a nursery themselves (such as that we have observed being maintained at Halland House) must instead ‘buy them already grafted to their hands of them that make their living of it’, again implying a prevalence of such practitioners.<sup>42</sup> However, according to the *OED Online*, John Parkinson’s is the first recorded use of the term ‘nurseryman’, indicating perhaps the relatively recent specialisation of this aspect of the horticultural trade. Parkinson rarely actually names any nurserymen (perhaps because he has nothing good to say about them!), but there are two notable exceptions. One is his reference to Master Ralph Tuggie, describing and illustrating two carnations named after him as ‘the most beautiful that I ever did see’ and referring to Tuggie himself as ‘the most industrious preserver of all natures beauties’.<sup>43</sup> Tuggie is again referred to as a ‘Florist’ in Thomas Johnson’s 1633 revised edition of Gerard’s *Herball*, coupling his name with both John Parkinson and John Tradescant,<sup>44</sup> while Tradescant himself notes in the back of his copy of

---

<sup>41</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, pp. 574, 571

<sup>42</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 538. William Lawson also mentions that some ‘buy sets [of apple trees] already grafted’, although he does not recommend this, it ‘is not the best way’. Nevertheless, it reinforces the view that there are those that make a living of it: Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, p. 17[51]

<sup>43</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, pp. 312-314, see also **Figure 51**, p. 232 above.

<sup>44</sup> Johnson, *Gerard’s Herball* (1633), pp. 161, 589, 785

Parkinson's *Paradisi* that he has in his garden '4 more Roses whearof Mr Tuggy Hathe two'.<sup>45</sup> The other nurseryman that Parkinson picks out for special mention is 'Master John Millen, dwelling in Olde Streete, who from John Tradescant and all others that have had good fruit, hath stored himselfe with the best only, and he can sufficiently furnish any'.<sup>46</sup> Clearly Parkinson did not regard all nurserymen as untrustworthy rogues. Again, Thomas Johnson agreed that anyone who wanted gooseberry bushes, apricot, peach, pear, plum, apple or cherry trees for their garden that they were 'to be had with Mr John Millen in Old-street, in whose nursery are to be found the choisest fruits this kingdom yields'.<sup>47</sup>

The 'Agas' map of London (c.1561) shows Old Street running east-west along the northern outskirts of the city, with a few houses with large garden areas surrounded on three sides by open fields. How long there had been a nursery on this site is not known, but a 'Plan of an Estate in Old Street', drawn in 1633 by Adam Bowen shows a large area on the northern side, clearly marked as 'Millians Land'.<sup>48</sup> However, this nurseryman does not appear at all in Gerard's original version of the *Herball* published in 1597, so it is to be assumed that the Old-Street nursery had only established its reputation since the beginning of the seventeenth century.

---

<sup>45</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi in Sole, Paradisus Terrestris* (1629), Bodleian Library, Antiq.c.E.1629.1. Not only was Ralph Tuggie a renowned florist in his day, but his reputation lived on: Sir Thomas Hanmer refers to 'one Tuggey in Westminster' who raised some good Auriculas bearing his name 'about thirty yeares since', and in 1665 John Rea lists in his *Flora* a number of Auriculas that 'retain the names of those that raised them', including Tuggie among them: *Garden Book*, p. 80; Harvey, *Early Nurserymen*, p. 43

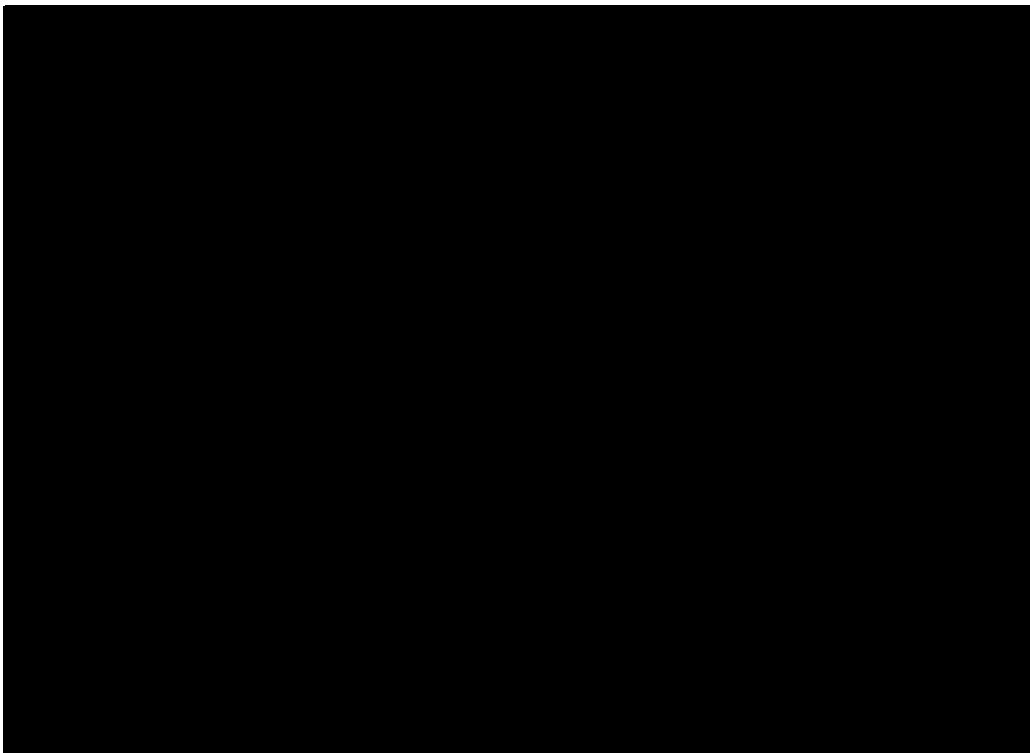
<sup>46</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 575

<sup>47</sup> Johnson, *Gerard's Herball* (1633), pp. 1324, 1448, 1456, 1496, 1506

<sup>48</sup> Such variations in name spellings are to be expected - elsewhere, Johnson refers to the same friend in Old Street as John Milion: *Gerard's Herball*, p. 481



**Figure 52** Detail from the 'Agas' Map showing Olde Streete, c.1561  
City of London, Guildhall Library



**Figure 53** Plan of an Estate in Old Street, Adam Bowen, 1633  
City of London, Guildhall Library, Worshipful Company of Ironmongers Archive

John Gerard did however recommend several suppliers of fruit trees himself: in his chapter on pears, he mentions by name ‘Master Henry Banbury of Toothill Street neere unto Westminster, an excellent graffer & painfull planter’, ‘Master Richard Pointer, a most cunning and curious graffer and planter of all manner of rare fruits, dwelling in [...] Twickenham’ and Master Warnar, a diligent and most affectionate lover of plants from Horsey Down by London’, in whose ground ‘all these before specified and many sortes more’ will be found growing.<sup>49</sup>

John Harvey has investigated the lives of the three growers mentioned by Gerard and found that Henry Banbury’s nursery business was run through at least three generations of the same family from the address in Tothill Street on the western outskirts of Westminster, just south of St James’ Park.<sup>50</sup> Locating Tothill Street on a map of London dating from around 1643 reveals its proximity to ‘Tuttle Feilds’ where a number of areas given over to the growing of orchards are clearly depicted.<sup>51</sup> We are reminded that this is also where Ralph Tuggie maintained his garden.

Harvey was unable to discover anything further about Mr Warnar, but again, locating Horsy-Downe on the same London map shows a similar area on the outskirts of town, surrounded by a number of fields and orchard areas, but this time to the south-east, just across the river from the Tower of London. Mr Pointer’s nursery was way up-river in ‘a small village neere London called Twickenham’, beyond Richmond and Hampton Court.<sup>52</sup>

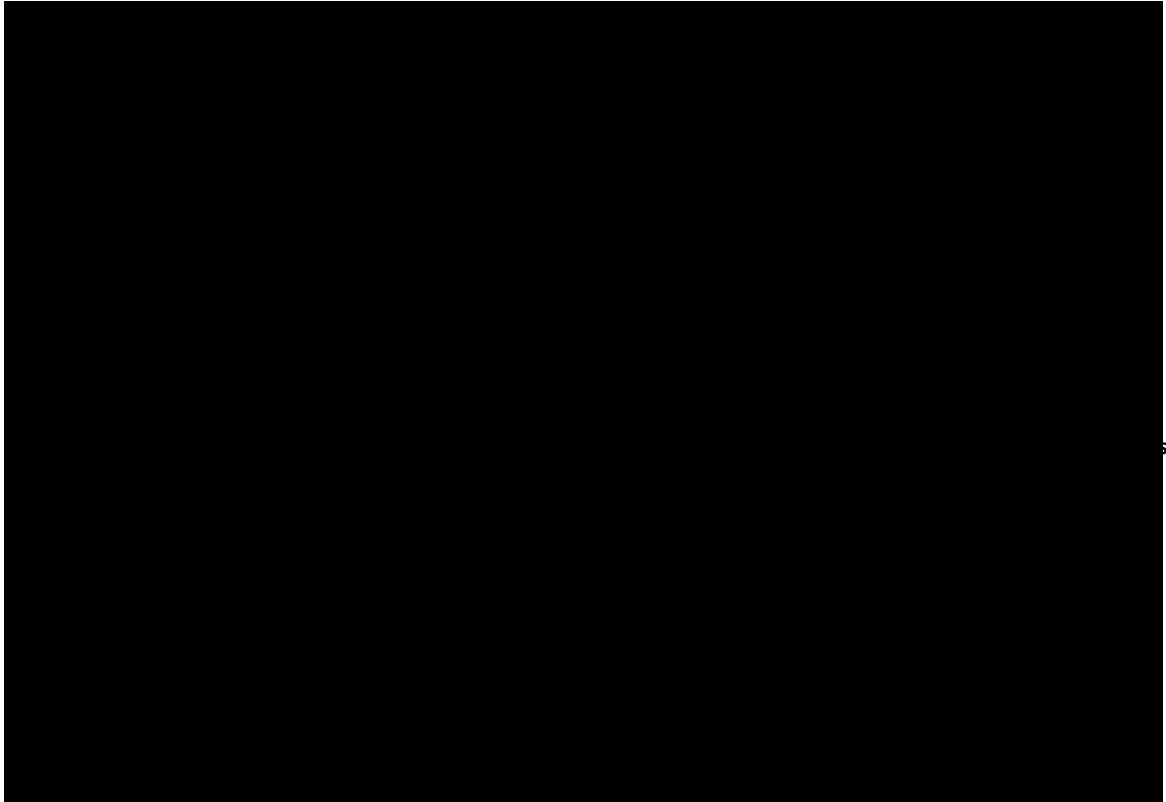
---

<sup>49</sup> Gerard, *Herball*, p. 1269

<sup>50</sup> Harvey, *Early Nurserymen*, pp. 40-41

<sup>51</sup> See **Figure 54** over: London, Guildhall Library, Faithorne and Newcourt Map of London, pub. c.1658, surveyed c.1643.

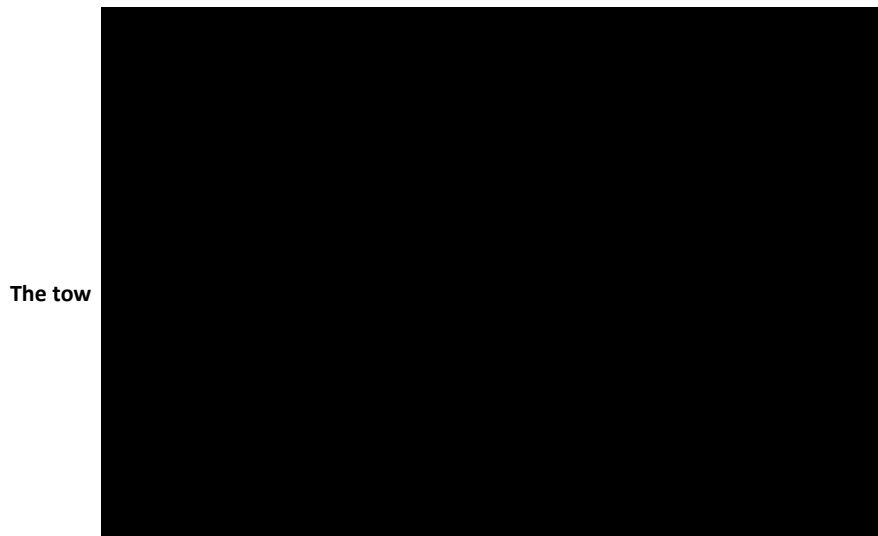
<sup>52</sup> Gerard, *Herball*, p. 1269



**Figure 54 Detail from the Faithorne and Newcourt Map of London, showing Westminster, Tothill Street and Tuttle Fields, c. 1643**  
City of London, Guildhall Library. Annotated by the author.

The contemporary writer, John Stow, who produced his '*Survey of London*' in 1598 also backs up some of this information. He notes, with apparent regret, that a number of areas outside the city walls are 'now' made into 'garden-plots'. Stow's publication was the result of many years of living and compiling his work in London and much of it seems to be a wistful looking back to the 'good old days' of his childhood. He mentions 'The Town Ditch without the wall', originally built for the defence of the city, but which is now either a narrow, filthy channel or 'altogether stopped up for gardens planted'. He cites in particular an area along the Minories, just outside the city wall to the east, where the ditch is 'inclosed, and the banks thereof let out for garden-plots [...] whereby the city wall is

hidden' and indeed, these very gardens can be seen depicted on the 'Agas' map of the city, all along the eastern stretch of the city wall between Posterngate and Aldersgate.<sup>53</sup>



**Figure 55 Detail from the 'Agas' Map of London, showing the garden plots along the Minories and around Goodman's Fields, c. 1562**  
Annotated by the author.

Tower Hill is now 'greatly diminished by building of tenements and garden-plots' and a farm belonging to Goodman, from where the young John Stow used to fetch milk as a child, has now been taken over by his son and let out as garden-plots. Again this can be seen on the 'Agas' map section above. The area around Spitalfields which once comprised 'pleasant fields, very commodious for citizens [...] is now within a few years made a continual building throughout of garden-houses and small cottages; and the fields on either sides to be turned into garden-plots'.<sup>54</sup> As it is very clear that Stow does not view these changes as a good thing, it is safe to assume that these 'garden-plots' were not ornamental or pleasure gardens, but were recently established commercial concerns spreading ever

<sup>53</sup> John Stow, *A Survey of London written in the year 1598* (edn. repr. Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2005), pp. 39, 122-3

<sup>54</sup> Stow, *Survey of London*, pp. 122-5



further around the outskirts of his city. John Harvey has also noted that one of the largest London nurseries after the Restoration, kept by Captain Leonard Gurle, was founded in this area 'between Spittle-fields and WhiteChappel' sometime during the early decades of the century and fifty years after Stow was writing, the Faithorne and Newcourt map shows garden plots and orchards extending far eastwards down river towards Stepney and beyond.<sup>55</sup>

From these examples then, it is evident that by the mid-seventeenth century the suburban areas of the city, whether north, south, east or west, appear to be given over to large-scale gardening, gradually moving outwards as areas of new housing extended well beyond the city walls.<sup>56</sup> Much of this is likely to have been market-gardening, growing vegetables and herbs for sale in the London markets, but some of these areas at least must have been given over to the growing of plants and trees for sale.

Although most of the examples cited above refer to suppliers of fruit trees, there was also clearly a market for the large-scale production of native hedging plants and trees, such as were supplied for the new garden at Grays Inn Court laid out at the end of the sixteenth century under the direction of Sir Francis Bacon. The accounts indicate the purchase of a phenomenal number of hedging plants: 20,000 quicksets and 20,000 privet plants were bought at 3s 8d and 2s per thousand respectively, as well as 8 birch trees, 16 cherry trees and 66 elms - and these were presumably full size trees because they are sold for 18d, 12d and 9d each - as opposed to similar prices per hundred for the 3,700 eglantine [rose or

---

<sup>55</sup> Harvey, *Early Nurserymen*, p. 45; Faithorne and Newcourt Map of London, c.1643

<sup>56</sup> For more on the growth of market gardens, see Fisher, *London and the English Economy*, pp. 67-69 and Thick, *The Neat House Gardens* (1998).

sweetbriar] plants and 3,400 oziers, or per thousand for the quicksets. Finally, there were 125 standard roses at 10s per hundred and 1600 woodbines [honeysuckle] at 6d per hundred.<sup>57</sup> Records such as these beg the question as to where it was possible to purchase so many plants at one time in an area which was, relatively speaking, not rural. There are two possibilities to consider here. One is the likelihood, as discussed above, that in the London area at least, large scale commercial nursery gardens were being set up and run in order to meet this kind of demand. The other is that goods such as these were being imported to London from the provinces to meet demand.<sup>58</sup> Whatever their source however, a network of supply was clearly available to those who needed it.<sup>59</sup>

It is also likely that, in London at least, gardeners were able to buy their seeds and plants from shops. Although there is even less firm evidence for this than for the nursery business, there are nevertheless enough clues to enable an examination of this possibility. John Stow mentions a shop on the corner of Soper Lane and Cheapside 'wherein a woman sold seeds, roots and herbs'; in July 1631, Robert Hill, a grocer 'dwelling at the three Angells in lumber [Lombard] streete' sold a large variety of garden seeds to John Winthrop on the eve of his setting sail for Massachusetts for the colony he was to establish there - the bill came to £1 6s 0d; John Gerard purchased his first specimen of the new potato plant from the Americas from the Royal Exchange, although it 'perished and rotted' once he had planted it in his garden; records show a 'Seedsman Child' living and working at a premises

---

<sup>57</sup> David Jacques 'The Chief Ornament of Gray's Inn: The Walks from Bacon to Brown' *GH*, 17:1 (1989), 41-67 (p. 45)

<sup>58</sup> Fisher, *London and the English Economy*, p. 65

<sup>59</sup> It is worth noting here that although in this instance flowering plants are being supplied, they are nothing particularly outstanding or unusual. John Parkinson describes the eglantine rose as being 'not onely planted in Gardens [...] but growing wilde in many woods and hedges'. Honeysuckle likewise 'groweth wilde in every hedge': Parkinson, *Paradisi*, pp. 418, 404. Plants such as these may well have been supplied by a nurseryman who, as discussed previously in the case of quicksets, was taking cuttings from the countryside and growing them on on his own land for sale.

in Pudding Lane in 1560.<sup>60</sup> John Harvey has concluded that until at least the second half of the seventeenth century, the trade of selling seeds was carried out alongside other businesses.<sup>61</sup> Indeed, it is difficult to see how anyone could make a year-round living out of so seasonal an activity as seed sowing and it is feasible for instance, as has been suggested by John Parkinson's biographer, Anna Parkinson, that the seeds and plant roots used by apothecaries may well have also been sold from their shops for the garden.<sup>62</sup>

Anna Parkinson has also speculated that John Parkinson sold a wider range of plants directly from his garden at Long Acre, but, although plausible, there is little evidence for this.<sup>63</sup> Similar hypothesizing which stands up to slightly tougher scrutiny is directed toward the John Tradescants, elder and younger, and the famous garden which they established at the property into which the family settled in South Lambeth in around 1629. This property, which became known as 'Tradescant's Ark', was filled with exotic rarities that the Tradescants had collected either themselves or indirectly via other travellers from around the globe: plants were displayed in the garden and 'curiosities' were displayed in the house.<sup>64</sup> The museum, which may have been reminiscent of those in Paris owned by Pierre Morin and Monsieur Perishot, both famous for their collections of pictures, precious stones, shells and insects as well as plants,<sup>65</sup> became famous and was visited both by those with a thirst to further their scientific knowledge as well as by the merely curious. It would appear, from extant records at least, that this was the first garden to be opened to the public

---

<sup>60</sup> Stow, *Survey of London*, p. 236; Ann Leighton, *Early English Gardens in New England: 'for meate or medicine'*, (London: Cassell, 1970), p. 190; Gerard, *Herball*, p. 780; Ronald Webber, *The Early Horticulturists* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1968), p. 55

<sup>61</sup> Harvey, *Early Nurserymen*, p. 4

<sup>62</sup> Anna Parkinson, *Nature's Alchemist*, p. 177

<sup>63</sup> Anna Parkinson, *Nature's Alchemist*, p. 111

<sup>64</sup> Leith-Ross, *The John Tradescants*, pp. 89-90

<sup>65</sup> Described by John Evelyn in his *Diary*, II, pp. 114, 133

for the price of a fixed entrance fee, although whether or not plants were available for sale is more difficult to ascertain. On 2nd May 1662, Sir Daniel Fleming's household accounts record details of a visit to Tradescant's Ark. As well as a shilling for a coach from Whitehall, two shillings for 'a Boat thither and back again', across the river from Westminster to Lambeth, and a further two shillings for four entrance fees at sixpence each, there is also an entry for 2s 6d 'spent at Jo. a Tradeskins'.<sup>66</sup> There is no further detail, but it is reasonable to speculate that this may have been for plants from the garden. Given that we know, for instance, that Pierre Morin was selling plants from his nursery which also housed a collection of rarities visited by the public, it is possible that the Tradescants were also running a nursery from their premises.<sup>67</sup>

One final piece of evidence of a rapidly developing horticultural trade to be mentioned here is indicated by the establishment of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners by Royal Charter in 1605. There had been a gardeners' guild in existence since 1345, but clearly a need was now felt to tighten the regulation of the work of gardeners. One of the stated aims of the Company was to protect the professional gardener from 'ignorant and unskilful persons who have taken upon themselves to practise the said trade, not having been apprenticed thereto, have sold dead and corrupt plants, seeds, stocks and trees.'<sup>68</sup> The limited success in this objective is perhaps indicated by John Parkinson's remarks

---

<sup>66</sup> Leith-Ross, *The John Tradescants*, p. 91

<sup>67</sup> And in the same way that John Evelyn was inspired by the garden of Pierre Morin in Paris to attempt to recreate it in his own garden at Sayes Court, it is likely that visitors to the Tradescant's garden may also have left, not just with plants, but with ideas and inspiration for their own gardens.

<sup>68</sup> Welch, *History of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners*, p. 22

above regarding rogue nurserymen. Nevertheless, the incorporation of the gardeners into a Company does point to a rapid development of the gardening trade and a perceived need to control it - gardening was now a trade worth protecting.

Despite the anecdotal nature of much of the evidence presented above, it is nevertheless possible to draw some conclusions about the general picture of the plant trade in England in the years prior to the mid-seventeenth century. In the provinces, these were likely to be more informal arrangements, involving the commercial or non-commercial exchange of easily available native plants, whilst in London, there is evidence that commercial nurseries were being established, who were already supplying keen gardeners not just in the capital, but all over the country. It appears that those with sufficient means to overcome the obvious difficulties of supply and transport were able to satisfy their needs through the existing trade networks. At the same time, the existence of informal non-commercial networks of exchange between fellow gardeners was equally prevalent in both London and throughout rural England. However almost all of the transactions referred to here deal with the supply of fruit-trees, native hedging plants and vegetables and herbs for the garden. What we have not yet come across, despite the increased interest in ornamental plants since the early years of the seventeenth century, are nurseries trading in the new range of flowering plants.<sup>69</sup> It is to this question that attention will now be directed.

---

<sup>69</sup> Even Ralph Tuggie, who apparently stands alone as a 'Florist' amongst renowned nurserymen (see p. 239 above), was not dealing with rarities from abroad, but with established English garden flowers – carnations, roses and auriculas.

## 4.2 'All sorts of Out-landish flowers': Acquisition, trade and exchange of foreign plants

John Harvey has noted the time lag between new plants being introduced into the country during the time of Gerard, Parkinson and Tradescant the elder and the beginning of the large-scale nursery trade in the second half of the seventeenth century, observing a rise in the specialised trade of the nurseryman in cultivating, improving and distributing plants, a phenomenon not brought about through hundreds of years of utilitarian gardening, but which was now synonymous with the increased interest in gardening for pleasure. He notes that by 1700, fifteen or so nurseries of some standing were established in greater London.<sup>70</sup> The subject of this chapter is to examine what was happening in England in the earlier years of the seventeenth century, during that time lapse between the introduction of the plants and the establishment of an organised domestic plant trade and it needs to be considered how these plants first arrived in England and to examine what effect these new introductions had on the way Englishmen viewed their gardens. By way of illustration, the quintessential example of the rare and exotic being imported into England - the tulip - will be discussed in detail in order to try and explore some of these ideas.

The unique place of the tulip in seventeenth-century garden history cannot be underestimated. It is difficult to imagine now what this common-or-garden plant represented in the minds of early seventeenth-century gardeners, but at that time, the tulip, now so quintessentially Dutch, was 'a strang[e] and forraine flower'.<sup>71</sup> It was new, never having been seen before in this part of Europe, so it had novelty value; it was exotic, being brought to Europe through Constantinople from middle East; it was unpredictable in that it

---

<sup>70</sup> Harvey, *Early Nurserymen*, pp. 51, 15, 5

<sup>71</sup> Gerard, *Herball*, p. 116

apparently changed its colour from one year to the next and perhaps most importantly, it appeared, like Shakespeare's Cleopatra, in infinite variety. It varied in colour, shape and form: it could be any shade of white, yellow, red or purple; it could be a single colour, variegated or striped; it could have pointed, rounded or feathered petals. And once the bulbs were planted, due to the accidental and unknown processes of cross-breeding, mutation and disease, they were quite likely to change and produce new and different flowers: a grower could never be entirely sure what they were going to get, but this of course only added to their mystery.<sup>72</sup>

In 1597, John Gerard describes just fourteen varieties in his *Herball* and it is likely that he first saw these tulips in the garden of his friend James Garret, an apothecary, originally from Flanders, who lived and worked in London. Gerard describes Garret as 'a curious searcher of simples', who had a particular interest in tulips. He had, according to Gerard,

undertaken to find out [...] their infinite sorts, by diligent sowing of their seeds, and by planting those of his owne propagation, and by others received from his friends beyond the seas for the space of twenty years.<sup>73</sup>

It would seem from this that tulips had been in England from at least 1577, and it is in fact likely that it was through Garret that they were introduced. A few years earlier, in 1571, Garret had received as a guest in his house fellow-countryman, Carolus Clusius, the most famous botanist of his age and a central figure in horticultural activity in Europe. Clusius maintained a huge network of correspondents which facilitated the free exchange of botanical information, seeds and bulbs and this network was responsible, among other

---

<sup>72</sup> Pavord, *The Tulip*, p. 8

<sup>73</sup> Gerard, *Herball*, p. 117

things, for much of the distribution of the tulip throughout Europe.<sup>74</sup> Given that we know from this correspondence that Clusius possessed tulips as early as 1570, we know that he visited his correspondent, friend and fellow-botanist James Garret in 1571 and we know from Gerard that Garret had been growing and experimenting with tulips in his own garden for at least twenty years, it seems a reasonable proposition that Clusius and Garret between them are strong contenders at least to take the credit for the introduction of the tulip into England.<sup>75</sup>

Taking up an appointment as director of the newly established botanical garden at the University of Leiden in 1593, Clusius planted over six hundred varieties of tulip both in the botanical garden and in his own garden which was repeatedly robbed of many of his highly prized varieties. This of course points to another of the tulip's desirable characteristics: because they were rare, exotic and curious, they were also expensive, making them collectable objects amongst wealthy connoisseurs. And herein lies the essence of probably the most well-known fact about the Dutch tulip trade, and that was the short-lived phenomena known as 'tulipmania' when, so the stories go, prized bulbs changed hands for the price of a house. For a brief period between the summer of 1636 and the spring of 1637 tulips were remarkably expensive. Because tulip bulbs spend most of the year out of sight

---

<sup>74</sup> Harkness, *The Jewel House*, p. 26; Goldgar, *Tulipmania*, pp. 22, 34. Harkness has identified and researched an English 'outpost' of this Europe-wide network, a Protestant refugee community of naturalists, practicing physicians and apothecaries who lived on Lime Street in London, including not only James Garret, discussed above, but also the renowned physician and botanist Matthias L'Obel who eventually became Royal Botanist in the court of James I, L'Obel's son-in-law James Cole and the Dutch consul Emmanuel van Meteran who carried out the vital role of postmaster for the community, ensuring the distribution of their letters, knowledge and specimens across Europe despite the political and religious disputes raging throughout the continent: Harkness, 'Living on Lime Street', in *The Jewel House*, 15-56. It is possible to speculate, as Anna Parkinson has done, that John Parkinson had connections with this group, but although he clearly shared their ideas and methods of working, it is impossible to tell from the available evidence whether this was the result of direct influence, or whether simply symptomatic of the times.

<sup>75</sup> For more on the introduction of the tulip into Europe see Goldgar, *Tulipmania*, esp. pp. 34-6



beneath the ground, sales took the form of contracts for unseen goods and also, as explained above, unknown goods - and the changes that could occur in the bulbs from one year to the next were not always for the better. Contracts were passed on for higher and higher sums, the potential for double-dealing was huge and when the time came, buyers could not pay and sellers could not deliver. Not surprisingly, the bottom dropped out of this market very quickly. Anne Goldgar convincingly argues that the extremes of tulipmania have been vastly exaggerated, the known 'facts' being based on contemporary moralizing propaganda.<sup>76</sup> That tulipmania happened is not disputed, but it did not have the seismic effects on personal fortunes and the wider economy that we have been led to believe.

Aside from heeding this note of caution, there are two more facts about tulipmania that must be borne in mind. One is that this was an economic phenomena and actually had little to do with the desirability of the plants. The other is that it was a Dutch phenomena and did not particularly effect the tulip trade in England. As we have seen, the fascination with tulips began much earlier and continued long after the mid-1630s when the crisis occurred. Tulips bulbs were always costly items for all the reasons discussed above. Tulips were desirable because of their rarity and beauty as flowers for the garden. After Gerard had described his fourteen tulips in 1597, thirty years later, John Parkinson describes well over a hundred varieties, occupying twenty four folio pages of his book, with four full page woodcuts illustrating thirty different kinds.<sup>77</sup>

---

<sup>76</sup> Goldgar, *Tulipmania*, p. 6

<sup>77</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, pp. 45-67

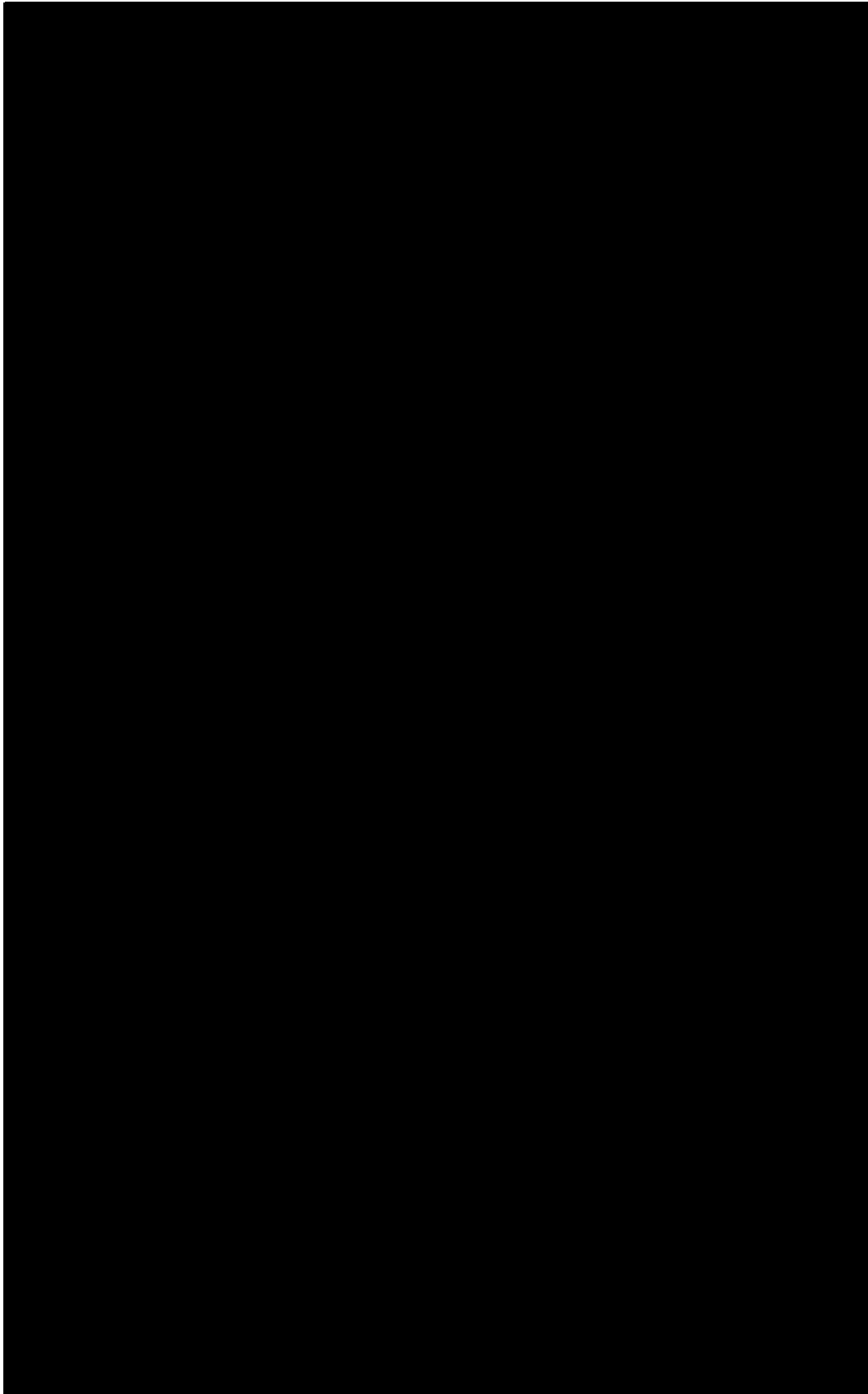


Figure 56 Tulips from Parkinson's *Paradisi in Sole*

Despite their place in Clusius' botanical garden, tulips had no medicinal uses. Gerard, always anxious to attribute plants with uses and virtues, noted that

There hath not been any thing set down of the antient or later Writers, as touching the Nature or Vertues of the *Tulipa*, but they are esteemed specially for the beauty of their flowers.<sup>78</sup>

And this is the essential point - as Gerard has observed, tulips were grown for their beauty and for their ornamental value alone. *This* was their virtue and, as Parkinson was to note, there are none that do not delight in them.<sup>79</sup> Another thirty years on and, as previously discussed, Sir Thomas Hanmer continues to extol the virtues of tulips 'the Queen of Bulbous plants, whose flower is beautifull in its figure, and most rich and admirable in colours and wonderfull in variety of markings'.<sup>80</sup> Elsewhere, he is more specific, saying of tulips that

the more colours there are in a flower the better, and the more unusuall and strange they are the more to bee esteemed, but it is necessary there bee either white or yellow stripes in every good Tulipe.<sup>81</sup>

There were now so many varieties of tulip available, that they could be ranked within themselves, some more 'esteemed' than others. And this points to another of the tulips many faceted qualities which have assured its place in garden history to the present day. As well as the highly prized varieties based on particular colour and stripe combinations that were sought after by connoisseurs who were prepared to pay high prices for their exclusivity, there were also less sought-after, less-esteemed plain-coloured varieties, that could be produced more cheaply for the mass market. So in effect, anyone could own a

---

<sup>78</sup> Gerard, *Herball*, p. 120

<sup>79</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 9

<sup>80</sup> Hanmer, *Garden Book*, p. 18

<sup>81</sup> Hanmer, insert 'On Tulips', reproduced in Evelyn, *Elysium Britannicum*, p. 445

tulip and grow it in their garden and it was upon this marketing potential - to be all things to all people - that the Dutch bulb trade grew and flourished.<sup>82</sup> As will be shown, the gardener's love affair with the tulip far outlasted the temporary madness of tulipmania: we know, for instance that Sir Thomas Hanmer exchanged bulbs with fellow tulip-fanciers such as John Rea, Sir J[ohn] Trevor and General John Lambert, the latter actually being lampooned for this love of these flowers, appearing caricatured in a pack of cards as the 'Knight of the Golden Tulip'.<sup>83</sup> Even when they became more common, the tulip was still prized as a beautiful plant to be given pride of place in the ornamental garden.

Although an extreme example, the tulip does encapsulate the essence of what made these new plants so desirable: they were exotic, different, mysterious, bringing an element of a new world unknown to most people into their gardens. They were collectable, expensive and grown specifically for their beauty and ornamental value.

Of course, the tulip was just one example of a flower, so rare and exotic at the beginning of the century, that was to eventually find its way into the generality of gardens of early modern England and there were a host of other routes by which such plants continued to arrive on English shores throughout the seventeenth century. Plantsmen were sent to buy plants from markets on the continent for their wealthy clients; travellers and adventurers journeyed across the globe, bringing back seeds and roots to be distributed amongst friends, acquaintances, or simply those who might be interested in them, or indeed, might know what to do with them. Plant-hunters were specifically commissioned to seek out

---

<sup>82</sup> Sharma, *The Embarrassment of Riches*, p. 351

<sup>83</sup> NLW, Bettisfield 1663; William Dawson, *Cromwell's Understudy: The Life and Times of General John Lambert* (London: Hodge, 1938), p. 456.

plants to bring back to England; others left these shores to collect plants for themselves and those living in enforced or voluntary exile during the Civil Wars eventually returned to England with new ideas, plants and contacts.

One well-documented example of an Englishman doing business with overseas nurserymen early in the century was John Tradescant, who travelled extensively throughout the Low Countries and France during 1611 to buy plants on behalf of Robert Cecil, the first Earl of Salisbury, for the gardens at the newly acquired and rebuilt Hatfield House.<sup>84</sup> Extant detailed bills for this journey reveal not only the plants he purchased and the prices paid for them, but also the nurseries that he visited and details of how the plants were transported back to England.<sup>85</sup> His first ports of call were in Holland where he bought a wide variety of fruit trees from nurseries in Delft and Haarlem, rare roses and shrubs from Leiden and eight hundred tulip bulbs from a second nursery in Haarlem, for which he paid 10s a hundred. Although this was twenty years prior to the ‘tulipmania’ which afflicted Holland in the 1630s, it is interesting to note that a healthy trade in tulip bulbs was clearly already well-established in that country and that they were beginning to be brought back to England by plant enthusiasts such as Tradescant.

---

<sup>84</sup> This was Tradescant’s first known employment, which began on 1st January 1610 and for which he received a salary of £50 a year, a very substantial wage for a gardener. However, Tradescant was forty years old by this time and clearly must already have built a significant reputation in order to attract so eminent an employer as the Secretary of State. Unfortunately, nothing is known about his early career, although a letter written in 1609 by Tradescant to William Trumbull, secretary at the British Embassy in Brussels, regarding passports to travel on the continent indicate that by this time he was already travelling abroad on behalf of other people, his familiarity with the bureaucracy involved suggesting that he had probably been doing so for a number of years. Whether it was his expertise as a gardener or his experience as a businessman abroad that prompted him to be sent on a two-month long plant-buying trip to Holland and France in September 1611 is open to debate, but clearly it was a winning combination for a successful shopping expedition: Leith-Ross, *The John Tradescants*, pp. 26-28; Sonia Anderson, ‘The Elder William Trumbull: A Biographical Sketch’, *British Library Journal*, 19 (1993), 115-132

<sup>85</sup> Leith-Ross, *The John Tradescants*, pp. 28-40

Whilst in Holland, Tradescant also purchased £38 worth of trees for Cecil's friend, the recently knighted Sir Walter Cope, who was engaged in building a new house and garden in Kensington - Cope Castle, later to become known as Holland House.<sup>86</sup> A few years earlier in 1600, Baron Waldstein, a young Moravian nobleman visited England where he was received by Sir Robert Cecil and he records in his diary a visit to 'the house of a certain Monsieur Cope [...] not especially pretentious or large' but with 'a very lovely garden'.<sup>87</sup> This must have been Cope's former London home, but it reveals an interest in gardens and plants which he carried to his new house on a larger and more extravagant scale and the fact that he took advantage of Tradescant's trip on behalf of Cecil lends further weight to Tradescant's reputation as a reliable plantsman able to secure and supply the rare and exotic for those who could afford to pay.

After leaving Holland, Tradescant continued his journey to Paris where he met with the French King's gardeners, Jean and Vespasien Robin and took the opportunity to stock up on a wide variety of exotic rarities, presumably not available in the nurseries he had visited in Holland and Flanders, such as orange trees in pots, pomegranate trees, oleander trees, myrtle trees and 'manye other Rare Shrubs give me by master Robyns'.<sup>88</sup> Nearly twenty years later, John Parkinson comments that pomegranates 'never beareth ripe fruit in this our Countrey', that myrtles similarly 'will not fructifie [...] nor yet abide without extraordinary care' in this country of ours and he does not mention oleanders at all. These

---

<sup>86</sup> Leith-Ross, p. 33; *Oxford DNB* [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/6257](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/6257) [accessed 9 June 2011]

<sup>87</sup> *The Diary of Baron Waldstein*, p. 173

<sup>88</sup> Leith-Ross, *The John Tradescants*, p. 37. Whether this is the first time these gardeners had met is unknown, but it was a relationship that continued after this visit, Tradescant and the Robins exchanging plants on a number of occasions. In his list of acquisitions written in the back of his copy of *Paradisi in Sole*, Tradescant notes a number of plants procured from 'Mr Robine' in 1629.

were indeed rare acquisitions - it would be fascinating to know how they fared, if at all, at Hatfield.

However, it has to be remembered that this kind of shopping trip was not typical. Robert Cecil held one of the highest offices in the land, the gardens at Hatfield House were famous for their extravagance and John Tradescant was both an extraordinary plantsman and, it would appear, well-travelled businessman, who was in the privileged position of being able to combine his knowledge and skill for the benefit of himself and his employer. What this example does indicate however is that although as yet there is little evidence of an organised horticultural trade in dealing with rare and ornamental plants in England, there clearly was a flourishing trade in such plants on the Continent, and for those with sufficient means, it was possible to travel abroad and purchase plants that were not yet available at home.

Of greater significance perhaps were the plant-hunting adventures of his own that John Tradescant embarked upon after leaving the employ of the Earl of Salisbury. In June 1618, he joined a ship bound for Archangel on the northern coast of Russia under the command of Sir Dudley Digges, who had been sent by the King on a mission to negotiate the terms of a loan with the Russian Tsar in Moscow. Tradescant's official role on this expedition is unclear, but the fact that he kept an extremely detailed extant account of this journey suggests that he was taken along as a naturalist by appointment rather than joining the trip at his own instigation. Whatever the case, he certainly took advantage of any opportunity to go ashore and record the flora and fauna that he saw. While the ship was moored at Archangel and the ambassadorial party were engaged in their, unsuccessful as it happens,

negotiations with the Tsar, Tradescant spent three weeks being carried by boat ‘from iland to iland to see what things growe upon them’. He mentions in particular ‘single rosses wondros sweet with many other things which I meane to bringe with me.’ He sailed home a full month ahead of the main party, presumably anxious to ensure that his precious cargo of plant specimens did not deteriorate too much.<sup>89</sup> Two years later Tradescant was off on his travels again, this time to North Africa, where he went, according to John Parkinson, ‘voluntary with the Fleete, that went against the Pyrates in the year 1620’. Whether his motivation was for further adventure, or whether his enthusiasm for plant collecting was such that he would take any free ride going is a moot point, but on this occasion he returned, again according to Parkinson, with many sorts of apricot trees and a wild pomegranate which had never before been seen in England.<sup>90</sup> Further opportunities to indulge his passion for collecting came when he entered the employ of George Villiers, the Duke of Buckingham in 1624, which once again involved much continental travel in a number of roles,<sup>91</sup> but wherever he went, Tradescant returned with plants and other curiosities, many well-chronicled by his ‘loving friend’ John Parkinson, who makes numerous references to ‘that worthy, curious, and diligent searcher and preserver of all natures rarities and varieties [...] John Tradescant’.<sup>92</sup>

Despite financial interests in the New World - he purchased two shares in the Virginia Company in 1617 - Tradescant the elder never travelled there himself, but his son made

---

<sup>89</sup> See Leith-Ross, *The John Tradescants*, pp. 53-65, where this diary is reproduced in full.

<sup>90</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, pp. 579; 430

<sup>91</sup> As well as plant buying, these included acting as a baggage-handler on the Duke’s journey to France for the proxy wedding of Henrietta Maria to Charles and as an engineer on the Duke’s ill-fated trip to La Rochelle in 1627: Leith-Ross, *The John Tradescants*, pp. 78, 82

<sup>92</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 346



three recorded visits to the Americas. The first was in 1637 where it is recorded in State Papers that the purpose of his visit was ‘to gather up all raritye of flowers, plants, shells, etc.’, apparently ‘under the auspices of the King’ and from whence he brought back ‘a couple of hundred plants hitherto unknown to our world’.<sup>93</sup> We learn this from the correspondence of one John Morris, inheritor of the London watermills built near London Bridge by his father in 1580, with his friend Johannes de Laet, a director of the Dutch West India Company in Holland.<sup>94</sup> Morris was an avid book collector and one of his particular interests was in botany. He was a great admirer of the work of John Parkinson, contributing no less than three dedications to his 1640 publication *Theatrum Botanicum*. With the help and advice of Parkinson and after a thorough inspection of the material, a list of the plants and dried specimens that Tradescant had brought back from this trip was compiled and circulated amongst interested botanists the following year.<sup>95</sup> Morris remarks that in addition there were ‘many seeds which do not yet show of what species they are likely to be’, a perennial problem with packets of dried seeds from unknown sources and which of course made cataloguing them impossible. Tradescant’s father had died while he was away on this trip, in April 1638, so upon his return, the son no longer had his father’s knowledge to draw upon and presumably this is why the task of identification and classification was left to others. Nevertheless, it is worth noting the concern to order and disseminate this new information to interested parties.

Although he never quite achieved the same horticultural reputation as his father, Tradescant the younger clearly took seriously his role in continuing his father’s work and

---

<sup>93</sup> Oxford DNB [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27655](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27655) [accessed 6 Feb 2008]

<sup>94</sup> J. Bekkers, *Correspondence of John Morris with Johannes De Leat (1634-1649)*, (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1970); Oxford DNB [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/71214](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/71214) [accessed 9 June 2011]

<sup>95</sup> Leith-Ross, *The John Tradescants*, p. 102

preserving his legacy. He contributed to the garden collection at The Ark by bringing back plants from Virginian voyages and although there is little evidence that he contributed anything of significance to the museum of curiosities, in 1656 he published *Musaeum Tradescantianum*, a catalogue of the 'Collection of Rarities preserved at South-Lambeth neere London', listing all the 'naturall' and 'artificiall' materials in the museum and concluding with the *Hortus Tradescantianus*, a comprehensive list of the plants in his garden. After much long and bitter legal wrangling subsequent to his death, the collection was eventually transferred, as he had wished, to Oxford University, as 'an honour to our Nation'. What is left of the collection remains today in the Ashmolean Museum.

Between them, the Tradescants have been credited with the introduction of many new plant varieties into England, but the fact is that many of these plants were in fact already growing in England:<sup>96</sup> in some cases perhaps not familiar to them, or in other cases not necessarily recognisable as the same varieties seen in England due to different growing conditions from where they were gathered.<sup>97</sup> Also, many plants recorded as being grown in England in the garden at South Lambeth and again attributed to the Tradescants as their plant introductions actually came to them first through friends and other contacts from their travels abroad.<sup>98</sup> Nevertheless, however much claims about the number of new

---

<sup>96</sup> Leith-Ross, *The John Tradescants*, p. 181

<sup>97</sup> For instance, Tradescant the elder notes a variety of currant brought back from his Russian trip: 'Ribes, or, as we call them, currant, whit, red and black, far greater than ever I have seen in this cuntrie' but the simple fact that these shrubs bore larger berries than he had seen before doesn't necessarily make them different or new plants: cited in Leith-Ross, *The John Tradescants*, p. 63

<sup>98</sup> For instance, John Parkinson describes and names a particular variety of Spiderwort - other varieties of the same plant being already known in England - as *Phalangium Ephemenum Virginianum Joannis Tradescant*, a 'Spider-wort of late knowledge, and for it the Christian world is indebted unto that painful industrious searcher [...] John Tradescant, who first received it of a friend, that brought it out of Virginia': *Paradisi*, p. 152. The whole genus of spiderwort, including all known varieties, is now classified as *Tradescantia*, a common house plant, even though, as Parkinson makes clear, all that can actually be attributed to Tradescant himself is that he took one variety of the genus from a friend who brought it from abroad and cultivated it in his garden. The name of the person who actually brought the plant from Virginia remains unknown.

varieties introduced into England may have been over-stated, the fact is that the John Tradescants, and in particular Tradescant the elder, were pioneers in collecting plants from overseas and attempting to cultivate them in their native country. They did this in a garden that was open to the public so that anyone could see the results of their endeavours and they were instrumental in the distribution of these plants amongst friends and colleagues who then planted and grew them in their own gardens, thus starting a chain of distribution and dissemination of knowledge amongst the wider gardening community.

Due then to their high profile adventuring as well as to the extant and comprehensive catalogues of their plant collections, the John Tradescants have deservedly earned their place in history as pioneering plant collectors of their age. However, there were others. John Parkinson mentions for instance a Guillaume Boel who travelled to Spain in 1607, searching for rare plants. Parkinson makes many references to Boel, ‘often before and hereafter remembered’, describing the plants he had brought back for him.<sup>99</sup> It would seem from a later remark by Parkinson that he actually commissioned Boel to collect plants for his garden - he complains bitterly that some of the seeds collected by Boel ‘but to me of debt, for going into Spaine almost wholly on my charge’ were given to someone else.<sup>100</sup> How this relationship actually worked is as unclear to us as it obviously was to the parties involved at the time: it seems unlikely that Parkinson would have paid for Boel to travel especially to Spain on his behalf to collect plants, but perhaps Boel was making the journey anyway, and Parkinson paid him to fetch him some plants while he was there. But whatever Parkinson might have felt about the matter, Boel clearly did not feel that he had

---

<sup>99</sup> See for instance, Parkinson, *Paradisi*, pp. 110, 126, 278

<sup>100</sup> Parkinson, *Theatrum Botanicum*, p. 1064

exclusive rights to the plants he had found. The point here however is that this was a commercial transaction, Boel being paid to seek out plants on behalf of clients.

Both Gerard's and Parkinson's books abound with examples of plants and seeds received from 'beyond the seas' as gifts, directly or indirectly via friends and acquaintances returning from voyages abroad. Gerard for instance writes that 'a friend of mine' brought a Golden Thistle from Peru and on another occasion, he received the root of a ginger plant by way of 'our men who sacked Domingo in the Indies [who] digged it up there in sundry places wilde'. Other times, he is less specific: he writes of a Persian Lily which grows naturally in Persia, but 'is nowe made by the industrie of travailers into those countries, lovers of plants, a denizon in some fewe of our London gardens'.<sup>101</sup> Already discussed are the rare and exotic plants received by John Parkinson, such as those from Boel and from his friend John Tradescant, which he planted in his garden. Others however, arrived by even more circuitous routes, such as the Indian Yukka plant, now flourishing in his garden which was first brought to England from the West Indies. John Gerard had kept one for a long time in his garden and then sent one to the Parisian nurseryman, Robin. His son, Vespasian Robin then sent one to Master John de Franqueville in London, who then passed it on to Parkinson.<sup>102</sup> He cites many plants as coming from Spain, Portugal and Constantinople, but which in fact originated from even further afield. In some cases the history was clearly known: for instance, a 'double yellow Rose, which first was procured to be brought into England, by Master Nicolas Lete [...] from Constantinople, which (as we heare) was first brought thither from Syria',<sup>103</sup> but there must be many other examples

---

<sup>101</sup> Gerard, *Herball*, pp. 994, 55, 152

<sup>102</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 434

<sup>103</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 420

where plants found in a particular place were assumed to be natives of that country, but which would in fact have originated from other parts of the world. As noted at the head of this chapter, plants have been on the move for a very long time!

One other way of obtaining exotic goods and plants is hinted at in other sources. On 4th August 1624, Sir John Oglander paid 4s to board a ship just in from the Barbary to purchase tobacco, dates and silk stockings.<sup>104</sup> Earlier, in 1596, a Dutch merchant, Simon Parduyn, went aboard a ship newly arrived from São Thomé ‘to ask for something strange’ and on another occasion a few years later took, among other things from a ship arrived from Guinea, a ‘fruit or other plant unknown to me’ which he sent to the great botanist Carolus Clusius.<sup>105</sup> Evidence such as this would suggest that another method of obtaining rare plants was simply to board the ships when they arrived in port and see what they had to offer.

There is an abundance of evidence then that rare and exotic plants were reaching England, by whatever means, from the beginning of the new century. The many examples found in the books of Gerard and Parkinson for instance offer a lively picture of a thriving network of enthusiasts and acquaintances through whom new plants from all over the globe were being imported, distributed and exchanged. But this is only part of the story: in what other ways were these plants being distributed? And how did that change between 1608 when Parkinson was carefully nurturing exotic plants brought back from Spain in his garden with various degrees of success and the end of the century when there were at least fifteen

---

<sup>104</sup> IOWRO, OG/AA/26

<sup>105</sup> Goldgar, *Tulipmania*, p. 25

nurseries of some standing established in London?<sup>106</sup> What evidence is there that the trade in ornamental plants began to flourish on a more organised commercial basis?

Harvey has examined this question from the viewpoint of the tradesmen and concludes that there is little in the way of firm evidence of trading (for instance, catalogues of seeds and plants for sale) until after the Restoration. However, it is possible to find evidence of a commercial trade in flowering plants earlier in the century by looking instead at this question from the point of view of those who were being supplied with the plants. Early references are scant but for instance, in a letter date 20th April 1609, John Chamberlain reports to his friend Dudley Carleton from Ware Park that ‘we have now fowre or five flowers from Sir Rafe Winwood that cost twelve pound’.<sup>107</sup> In the early 1630s, Sir John Oglander notes in his memorandum book that he has purchased ‘French Flowers’ which cost him 10 shillings a root, as well as all sorts of tulips.<sup>108</sup> In 1649, a carrier is paid 3s 9d for bringing a box of flowers from London to Tavistock, the Devonshire home of the Earl and Countess of Bath.<sup>109</sup> However, although anecdotes such as these tell us that exotic and expensive plants were clearly being purchased, they still offer no information as to where they were being obtained.

Given this paucity of evidence it is fortunate that there is one invaluable documentary source which sheds light on the trade in ornamental plants from the 1650s and that is Sir Thomas Hanmer’s previously discussed notebook, compiled during the years 1654-57,

---

<sup>106</sup> Harvey, *Early Nurserymen*, p. 5

<sup>107</sup> McClure, ed., *The Letters of John Chamberlain*, p. 290

<sup>108</sup> IOWRO, OG/AA/29, p. 27<sup>v</sup>

<sup>109</sup> Todd Gray, ed., *Devon Household Accounts, 1627-59, Part II* (Exeter: Devon and Cornwall Record Society, 1996), p. 79

which contains a unique record of plants which Sir Thomas purchased from various nurserymen in London and in Paris, as well plants he had given to and received from various friends and relatives.<sup>110</sup> Some of the lists are annotated with prices paid and the name and address of the suppliers. As already established, Sir Thomas Hanmer was undoubtedly one of the leading plantsmen of his age, so information on who was supplying him with plants with which to furnish his gardens is clearly of exceptional interest.

Throughout the notebook, Hamner names over thirty individuals, a number of them on several occasions, of whom twelve are in the business of selling plants, because in every case, Hanmer indicates how much he has paid for plants from these people. A further three are likely to be nurserymen as addresses are supplied that would indicate a business premises and another two of the named individuals are identified as gardeners. Of the remaining people mentioned, some are clearly friends and acquaintances because although plants are exchanged, no money ever appears to change hands. A handful are simply names about which no more information is provided.

The first thing to note is that the networks of informal and non-commercial exchange already discussed in the context of, for instance, Sir Thomas Temple and his supply of fruit trees or between plant enthusiasts and gardeners in London as mentioned by Gerard and Parkinson, continued into the 1650s as one way in which new varieties of exotic flowers and plants were distributed. Of Hanmer's friends and acquaintances, some, such as the Parliamentarian General John Lambert are well-known figures. On two occasions, Lambert is noted as a recipient of Hanmer's generosity, receiving from him in June 1655 'a very

---

<sup>110</sup> NLW, Bettisfield 1663. All the information in the next few pages comes from within the pages of this memorandum book unless otherwise stated.

great mother-root of [the tulip] Agate Hanmer' and more tulips in June 1656. Lambert is mentioned twice more by Hanmer who notes flowers he has particularly admired in his garden, also indicating from where Lambert has obtained these flowers: 'yellow jasmine, the double striped pomegranate, many Narcissi' including one from 'Mr Bed[?ing]ton, a merchant'. Although we have no more information about Mr Bedington, that fact that he 'furnished Ld Lambert' with this variety would indicate a business transaction rather than a gift.<sup>111</sup> On another occasion, Hanmer admires tulips in Lambert's garden 'from Moryn'. We have come across the Parisian nurseryman Morin before and will return to a fuller discussion of his business below.

Other friends and relatives are mentioned by Sir Thomas in a variety of contexts: there is a list of 'Tulips given by me to my cosin 1654', another of 'Gilliflowers given me by Mrs Thurl. apr. 1656'; a purple and white iris is admired in the garden of Mrs Seely In Shooe Lane; tulips are sent to Sir J Trevor, Mr Blackley, Mrs Thurloe and Mr Downton and bears ears sent to Lady Pooley who appears to be a neighbour in Lewisham. Clearly, networks of exchange of plants between fellow-gardeners continued to thrive, providing one means by which rare or exotic specimens were distributed. Once one person had obtained them, however they may have done that, then bulbs, off-sets, cuttings and seeds were passed around the circle of flower enthusiasts for cultivating in their own gardens.

Two individuals with whom Hanmer seemed to have a more ambivalent relationship were John Rose and John Rea. Rose is mentioned more times than any other individual in Hanmer's notebook in a number of contexts including the giving and receiving of tulips 'I

---

<sup>111</sup> Although Lambert was never formally created a peer, Hanmer consistently refers to him throughout his notebook as 'Lord Lambert'.



promised him the best offset of Ag Hanmer [...] I am to have from him an offsett of the Dutchess of Venice' and the supplying of gilliflowers. He also offers horticultural advice, all carefully recorded by Hanmer, on how to encourage reluctant seeds to germinate, how to sow bears ears and how to over-winter tender plants. Rose is well-known as a gardener, famously being appointed the king's gardener at St James' in 1661. At the time Hanmer knew him, it is likely that Rose was working for the earl of Essex, Robert Devereux, at Essex House in London, where Hanmer appears to have visited Rose in 1654, admiring some of the plants that he saw in the garden there.<sup>112</sup> Although not a nurseryman as such, Rose was clearly in a position to be able to supply plants and it appears on a number of occasions that he was acting as an intermediary between supplier and recipient. Hanmer notes that he 'left with Mr Rose [...] 9 rootes which Tho. Turner delivered to him last wynter', the gift of the tulip bulb for Lord Lambert was 'sent him by Rose'. Elsewhere, Hanmer writes that 'I left [London] September 1st, 42 star Anemones of Mr Downton and the 4 anemones from Mons. Picot to be set by Mr Rose for mee'. This last note implies the possibility that Rose might actually have worked for Hanmer, even if only on an occasional and independent basis.

The other individual with whom Hanmer had extensive dealings was his friend John Rea, who ran his own long-established nursery business at Kinlet, near Bewdley in Shropshire,<sup>113</sup> which although not exactly close to Bettisfield, was probably no longer than a day's ride away. Rea has already been mentioned as the author of *Flora: De Florum Cultura* published in 1665, intended as an updated version of Parkinson's *Paradisi in Sole*, and the first publication of its kind since 1629. It includes a dedicatory epistle to Hanmer

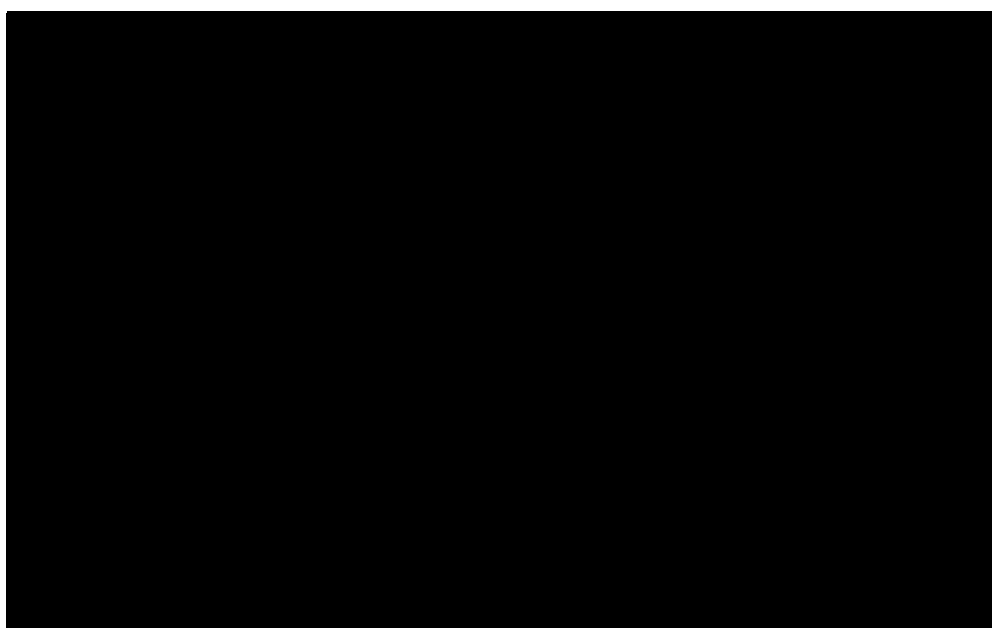
---

<sup>112</sup> *Oxford DNB* [www.oxforddnb/view/article/37913](http://www.oxforddnb/view/article/37913) [accessed 26 May 2008]; NLW, Bettisfield 1663

<sup>113</sup> *Oxford DNB* [www.oxforddnb/view/article/23212](http://www.oxforddnb/view/article/23212) [accessed 26 May 2008]

in which Rea praises both Hanmer's superior knowledge of gardening and his generosity which has 'furnished me with many noble and new varieties' from his 'incomparable Collection'.<sup>114</sup> In his notebook, Hanmer records 'Tulipes which I gave Mr Rea 1654', listing about 40 varieties. In the same year, he also mentions 'Reas good tulips' with which he filled a bed in the garden at Haulton. However, although Rea was in business, his dealings with Hanmer appear to be only reciprocal and there is no record of money ever changing hands between them. It would seem that, rather than any kind of business arrangement, this was a friendship based on a mutual interest in gardening.

However, of especial interest in these notebooks is the information provided about the commercial nurserymen with whom Hanmer did business, of which most were based in London. Mr Moulart is mentioned on three occasions: twice as the supplier of flowers admired by Hanmer in others gardens, and once as a supplier to Hanmer.

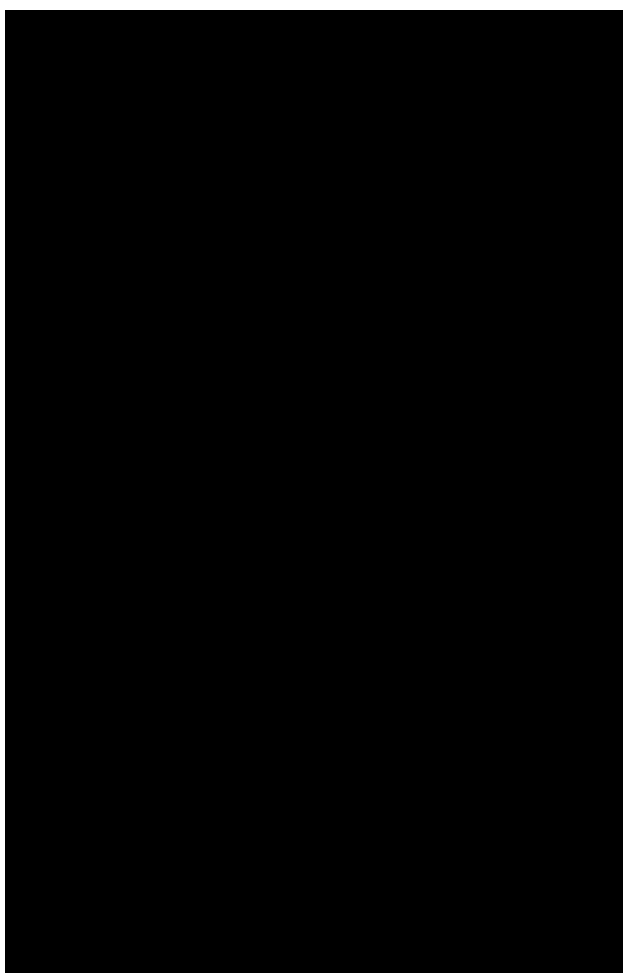


**Figure 57** Page from Sir Thomas Hanmer's Memorandum Book showing plants 'Bought of Moulart 1654'  
NLW, Bettisfield 1663

---

<sup>114</sup> John Rea, *Flora: De Florum Cultura, or A Complete Florilege* (London, 1665), sig. B2

John Harvey has identified Moulart as the James Moullar (Mullar), the ‘flowerist’ of Spitalfields, who died in 1666.<sup>115</sup> From Hanmer’s notes, he appears to be a specialist supplier of recently introduced bulbs. Hanmer also spends considerably larger sums of money buying plants from ‘Geldrop’ in 1655, but unfortunately there is no more information about this nurseryman and why his plants should be so expensive is unclear, but they are counted in pounds rather than shillings as above.



**Figure 58** Page from Sir Thomas Hanmer's Memorandum Book showing plants purchased from 'Geldrop 1655'  
NLW, Bettisfield 1663

Hanmer is particularly fond of ‘bears ears’ or auriculas, and his main supplier of these seems to be ‘Humphries of Woollstable in Westminster’. He bought several varieties in 1654 and took some of them to his garden at Haulton. Humphrey’s reputation as a

---

<sup>115</sup> Harvey, *Early Nurserymen*, p. 43

specialist in auriculas was also noted by John Rae in his *Flora* (1665) where he mentions auriculas named after ‘those that raised them’, and he includes Humphries in this list.<sup>116</sup> Westminster has previously been noted as an area which attracted a number of nurseries – Ralph Tuggie and Henry Bunbury both ran their businesses from there. Walker of St James, mentioned by Hanmer in his notebook as having many Virginia plants may well have been located in this area as well. There is an extant plan of Woolstaple executed by Ralph Treswell in around 1603, which shows a number of small houses arranged along the eastern side of the market place at Westminster, but although the houses are small - with a footprint of just one or two rooms - they all have reasonably large gardens, between 50 and 100 feet.<sup>117</sup> Clearly this was an area of London in which it was possible to lease sufficient land to run a small nursery business. Its proximity to the market place may also be significant. On the other side of town, on 27th March 165[7]<sup>118</sup> Hanmer bought gilliflowers from Smyth of Greenwich: he paid 18*d* for each root and 2*d* each for pots to put them in. At the same time he bought a range of other plants to ‘set in the border at Leusham’ as well as ‘3 pannes of beares ears seed for 14 shill.’ On another occasion he bought bears ears plants from Smith at 1*s* a root, again for the garden at Lewisham, which was of course, just a mile or so from Greenwich. Another nurseryman actually on the doorstep in Lewisham was [?Dolvine].<sup>119</sup> He supplied Hanmer with a wide variety of flowering plants, including hyacinths, narcissi, iris, anemones, ranunculas and columbines:

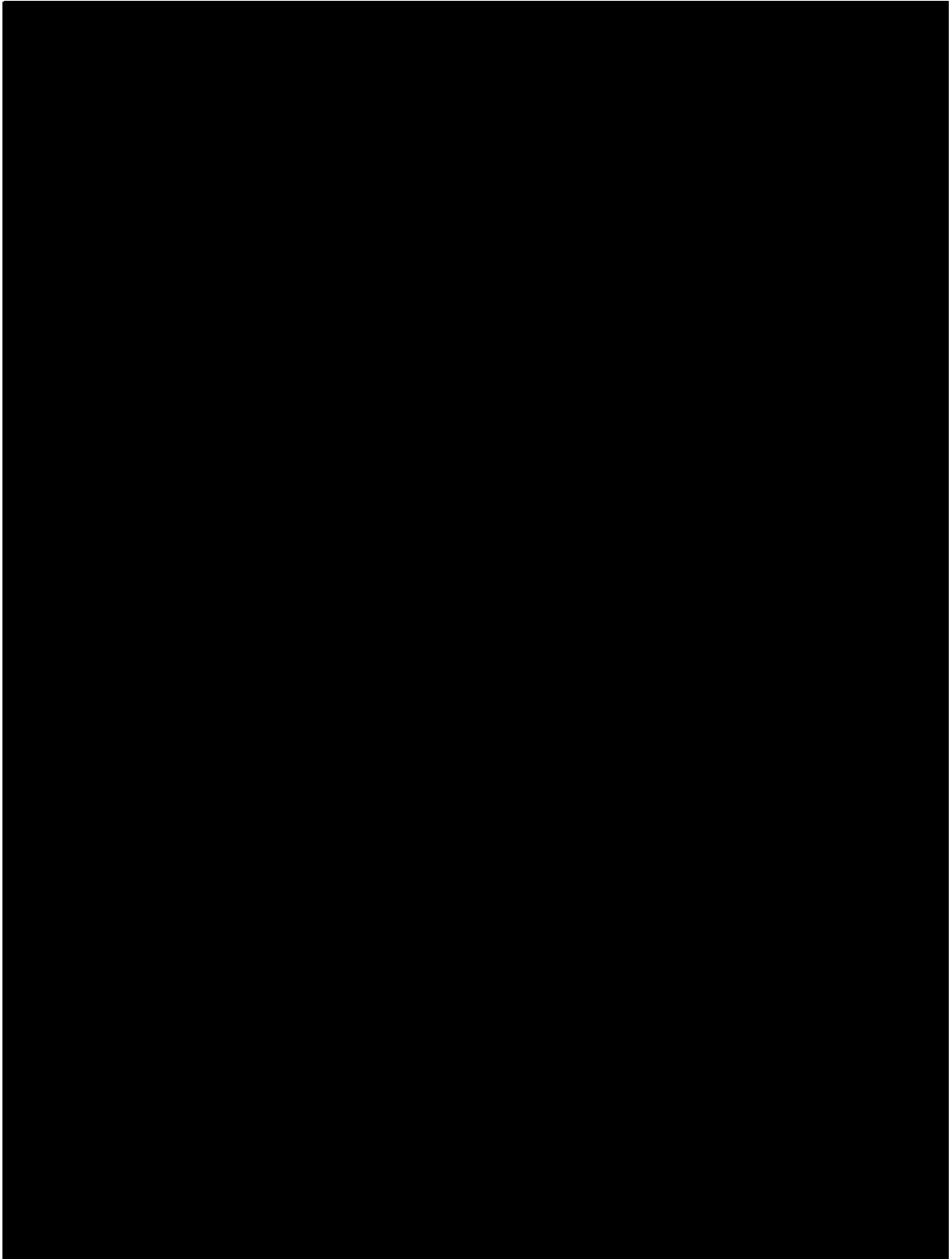
---

<sup>116</sup> John Rea, *Flora*, p. 153. According to Elspeth Thompson ‘by the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, auricula fancying was on a par with tulipomania’: Thompson, ‘Stalls or Circle?’, *The Garden* (April 2010), 234-39, (p. 236). Given what we now know about the exaggeration of the facts surrounding tulipmania, it is likely that this too is somewhat of an over-statement, but nevertheless it points to the popularity of this plant, which, like tulips, counted infinite variety of colours and patterns amongst its desirable attributes.

<sup>117</sup> John Schofield, *Treswell's Surveys*, p. 146.

<sup>118</sup> This date may be written incorrectly by Hanmer as it seems out of sync with the other dates in the notebook.

<sup>119</sup> The reading of this name is not entirely certain: see **Figure 59** over.



**Figure 59 Page from Sir Thomas Hanmer's Memorandum  
Book showing plants 'Bought of Dolvine' 1654'**  
NLW, Bettisfield 1663

On one occasion he also provided a spade for 2s 6d. Hanmer must have had a particularly good relationship with this nurseryman, as it seems that not only did he buy a significant amount of goods from him, but he also had them on account. In the summer of 1655, he notes at the bottom of another list of plants bought from Dolvine ‘I paid in part of their bill at Leusham £3 0s 0d’. Again, like Moulart, Dolvine clearly specialises in the new range of flowering bulbs and other plants. Finally here, although no location is identified, Hanmer buys a number of plants on various occasions from a supplier named Molet, and who he refers to at the head of one list as ‘old Molet’. Where prices are shown, the plants are quite expensive, up to £2 in one case, indicating perhaps a particularly specialised or well-renowned nursery garden.<sup>120</sup>

From this overview of nurserymen known to Hanmer it is clear that there were a significant number of established nurseries in 1650s London. That they were reasonably prevalent can be inferred from the fact that Hanmer has apparently been able to choose suppliers located either close to his house at Lewisham, well out to the east of London and south of the river, or otherwise located on the western outskirts of the city, more convenient for transporting plants to his home at Bettisfield in North Wales. The fact that Hanmer felt it necessary to deal with nurseries in London for the supply of these kinds of plants would indicate that they were not available more locally and that trade clearly was centred very much on the capital. It would seem too, from the scant information provided

---

<sup>120</sup> It is interesting to speculate whether this is André Mollet, the famous French gardener who travelled around Europe designing and laying out gardens for, among others, King Charles I at St James Palace and Queen Henrietta Maria at Wimbledon House before being summoned by Queen Christina to Stockholm in Sweden in 1648 to carry out work on the royal pleasure garden there. He left Sweden in the autumn of 1653 and nothing is known of his whereabouts for the next few years, except that at some point during that time he arrived once again in England where he was eventually employed once again to work on the St James Palace garden in 1661: Strong, *The Renaissance Garden in England*, p. 188; Goran Lindahl, ‘André Mollet, *Le Jardin de Plaisir*’, *Reviews, GH*, 32:2 (2004), p. 288. It is not inconceivable therefore that he may have spent some of the intervening years raising and selling plants in London.

here, that some nurseries were quite specialised, dealing mainly in bulbs as in the case of Moulart, or auriculas in the case of Humphries. Smyth and Dolvine appear to be slightly larger concerns, selling a wider variety of plants and also garden equipment such as pots and spades. What is absolutely clear though, is that all these London nurseries were catering for a new and growing market for flowering plants in a way that simply had not been seen before.

As previously mentioned and as evidenced in Hanmer's notebook is the fact that, as well as purchasing plants from the London nurseries, Sir Thomas continued to do business with nurserymen from abroad, specifically Monsieur Picot and Pierre Morin, both from Paris.<sup>121</sup> We have come across Pierre Morin before as the inspiration for John Evelyn's Oval garden at Sayes Court. Not only did Evelyn visit Morin's garden, but from his correspondence with his father-in-law Sir Richard Browne, we know that he purchased plants from there long after his return to England.<sup>122</sup> Sir Thomas Hanmer also spent time in Paris during the same period as Evelyn, so it is not surprising that an equally enthusiastic gardener and plantsman would have known of Pierre Morin's nursery and also continued to purchase plants from him once back in England. However, as well as providing the usual list of plants purchased and prices paid, Hanmer's notes regarding Morin add a further insight into his dealings with this nurseryman. There appears to have been much negotiation, not to say disputing, over the prices charged. Hanmer notes 'I desired these tulips of Moryn at a reasonable price but I wrote to [him] that this was wayh too deare' and again 'In my last letter I wrote to Moryn I would give but 16 pistoles for the anemones & ranuncules I sent for in my first letter – he asked 18 pistoles'. In May 1656, Hanmer records prices he has

---

<sup>121</sup> All references to these Paris nurserymen continue to be found in NLW, Bettisfield 1663.

<sup>122</sup> BL, Evelyn, Add. 78221

‘offered’ to Morin for a variety of plants, and on the next page he notes that ‘Moryn demands 20 livres le cent for Irises mixt.’<sup>123</sup> Hanmer clearly thought Morin’s prices were expensive, but from the above it is possible to conclude that prices were not fixed, but open to negotiation. It would also appear that the relationship between Hanmer and Morin was not always an amicable one. Having said that however, Hanmer clearly respected the nurseryman’s specialist knowledge - he noted advice given to him by Morin regarding the growing of tulips and the watering of plants, as well as copying out in full into his notebook Morin’s Catalogue of plants and flowers, published in 1651, which comprised lists of many varieties of tulips, iris, ranunculus and anemones.<sup>124</sup> Hanmer made use of this advice in his Garden Book and as well as referring therein to Morin’s ‘printed Catalogue’ on two separate occasions, once with reference to his collection of irises and again to his collection of anemones. It also appears again amongst the notes that Hanmer provided to John Evelyn for use in his *Elysium Britannicum*: ‘I shall not thinke it too much paines to insert by translating that part of Morines catalogue concerning Anemones, which perhaps many have not seene, nor can come by’ he wrote.<sup>125</sup>

The other Parisian nurseryman with whom Hanmer communicated is Mons. Picot. He noted advice from him regarding the growing of tulips and anemones which should ‘be

---

<sup>123</sup> It is difficult to ascertain meaningful currency conversions for this period, not least because the value of the French livre fluctuated considerably depending on time and place, but the general consensus would suggest that it was worth significantly less than the pound, one source suggesting that one English pound was worth approximately 13 French livres. Elsewhere, Hanmer deals with Morin in ‘pistoles’, a unit of French currency estimated to be equivalent to approximately 10 livres. In his edited edition of Evelyn’s diaries from around the same period, De Beer estimates that a pistole is equivalent to about 16s 6d - 17s, meaning by this reckoning that one livre is worth approximately 1s 8d, which is consistent with the above: De Beer, *Diary*, iii, p. 12, fn. 2; *OED Online*; [www.pierre-marteau.com/currency/convert/eng-fra.html](http://www.pierre-marteau.com/currency/convert/eng-fra.html) [last accessed 7 June 2011]

<sup>124</sup> Pierre Morin, *Catalogues de quelques Plantes a Fleurs qui sont de present au jardin de Pierre Morin le jeune, dit Troisieme, Fleuriste* (Paris, 1651)

<sup>125</sup> *Garden Book*, pp. 38, 59; Hanmer, insert ‘On Anemones’ reproduced in Evelyn, *Elysium Britannicum*, p. 352



planted all before the 10th September English account', reminding us that not only did foreign trade and communication involve different currencies, it also meant taking into account the use of a different calendar.<sup>126</sup> Hanmer also noted that his wife has received some plants from Picot, although one was lost 'after my wife wrote the names'. Mons. Picot does not thus far seem to have appeared in any other records, but it is interesting to note that his address, given very fully by Hanmer as 'fauxbourg St Germain rue St Pere proche la charite A Paris' is exactly the same as the address given in Morin's *Catalogue* for the location of his nursery. It is of course possible that these two nurserymen were running their businesses side by side, but it is also worth considering the possibility that Picot worked for Morin, and that on some occasions customers may have communicated directly with him rather than his employer. Morin's nursery was well-established by this time and sufficiently renowned to admit the possibility of employing staff - in his Garden Book, Hanmer described a particular variety of narcissus that 'flowred the seaventh day of October 1634 in Morynes garden in Paris', some twenty years earlier, and in 1629, John Tradescant records in the back of his copy of Parkinson's *Paradisi in Sole* that he purchased three varieties of ranunculus and three varieties of anemone 'From Morine'.<sup>127</sup> As already mentioned, it seems very likely that Hanmer would have met both Morin and Picot when he was living in France and that he continued to do business with them once he returned, despite the obvious difficulties, indicates loyalty and respect for these plantsmen, as well as a belief in the superiority of their plants, the varieties available and their expertise.

---

<sup>126</sup> French use of the Gregorian calendar was adopted much earlier than in England, and the result was that, with reference to dates, France would have been ten days ahead of England. In other words, the 10th September would have fallen ten or eleven days earlier in the year in France than in England and this crucial time difference was clearly thought worth mentioning by Picot with regard to the planting of anemone roots.

<sup>127</sup> John Parkinson, *Paradisi in Sole* (1629), Bodleian Library, Antiq.c.E.1629.1

Hanmer's notebooks then provide us with unequivocal evidence of not only the informal networks of exchange amongst fellow garden enthusiasts and trade with overseas nurseries already discussed, but also that by the 1650s there was clearly an established nursery trade centred around London dealing in a wide range of rare and no longer so rare ornamental plants for the garden, responding to the increased interest in flower gardening for pleasure among the gentry of the land.



**Figure 60 Auriculas, or Beares eares**  
from Parkinson's *Paradisi in Sole*, p. 237

As has been amply demonstrated then, from the late sixteenth century, new plants and ideas about gardening had been arriving in England in many ways: through immigrants, plant collectors, adventurers, travellers and tradesmen. Once they arrived, they were then distributed and disseminated through the same kinds of networks of communication and trade that had been in existence for centuries, although as we have seen, there were positive moves towards the development of an established commercial trade in ornamental plants for the garden at least as early as the mid-seventeenth century.

At the same time, expertise, advice and knowledge were also being disseminated through a similarly wide range of non-commercial networks. The intellectual community of horticulturists centred around the figure of Carolus Clusius has been mentioned, its influence reaching as far as the tight-knit group of naturalists living and working on Lime Street in London. The principles of the free exchange of intellectual ideas, botanical knowledge and methods of scientific study which underpinned this community continued into the new century where they manifested themselves again in correspondence networks such as the Hartlib Circle, this time centred around the figure of Samuel Hartlib and primarily concerned with agricultural improvement. These somewhat difficult to define intellectual networks were eventually to be given a permanence with the establishment of the Royal Society in 1660.<sup>128</sup>

Alongside these scholars and intellectuals however, at a much more local level gardeners and plant enthusiasts continued to share their knowledge and experience just as they always had done. Whether recommending varieties of apple tree to a neighbour, gathering

---

<sup>128</sup> Michael Hunter, *Establishing the New Science: The Experience of the Early Royal Society* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1989), p. 4

information regarding the cultivation of new plants from books, nurserymen or fellow-gardeners, paying to view the spectacular display of curiosities in Tradescant's Ark or simply looking over the garden wall to see what the neighbours were up to, ideas, inspiration and knowledge continued to spread amongst the gardeners of early modern England.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### STATUS AND IDENTITY IN THE EARLY MODERN GARDEN

It has now been discussed at length what the early modern garden may have looked like, with some account of the changes that occurred during the period under investigation and an attempt to identify the factors that brought about and facilitated these changes. It now remains to consider what impact these changes and developments had on attitudes and assumptions about gardens and gardening by looking through the eyes of those most directly involved and that is the gardeners themselves, both those who worked in gardens and those who were garden owners. There is some evidence that the status of the working gardener, like the activity of gardening itself, was becoming more elevated during this period, although as is so often the case, whilst some changes are discernible, in many cases the role of the working gardener in early modern England continued in much the same way as it always had done. Examination and discussion of these continuities and changes, including John Evelyn's attempt by the end of the period to establish gardening as an elite gentlemanly activity, will form the first part of this chapter. Consideration will then be given to what the gardens themselves actually meant to those who created them, what they said about them and how they contributed to defining their social and cultural identity.

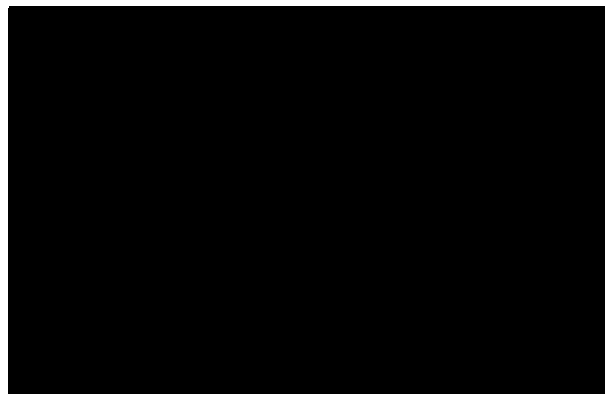


Figure 61 Illustration from William Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, 1618

## 5.1 ‘The misterie of Gardening’: Who was gardening in early modern England?

In Chapter 3, the role of the gardener during the sixteenth and early seventeenth century was examined in detail, identifying a hierarchy of workers employed in gardens from unskilled labourers hired to undertake tasks such as hedging, ditching and digging, paid by the job, the hour or the day and weeding women employed by the hour during the summer months, to highly skilled gardeners who were hired seasonally by the hour or day or, in some cases, employed as permanent members of the household. Their rates of pay were on a par with other skilled craftsmen: the Wardens accounts for the Worshipful Company of Carpenters for 1573 record payments to carpenters, tilers and gardeners who were all paid at the same rate of 1s 4d per day; at Trentham Hall in 1633 this same daily rate was still being paid to stone masons, carpenters and gardeners.<sup>1</sup> Records such as these, which span over half a century, would also suggest that little had changed for the working gardener over this period. Those employed as regular members of a household seem to come relatively high in the hierarchy of servants: at Quickswood in Hertfordshire for instance, the gardener is paid the same (£5 per year) as the clerk for the kitchen, the yeoman of the wine cellar, the gentleman of the chamber and the chaplain. At Hatfield House, the gardener Thomas Tudor is referred to as the ‘Master gardener’ commanding a salary in 1636 of £25 per year, and is apparently the highest paid member of the household.<sup>2</sup> A portrait of Thomas Wentworth, c. 1575, shows the gardener dressed in the household livery.<sup>3</sup> Although it is difficult to make generalisations on such scant information, it is fair to assume that the gardener was clearly a valued member of the household, well-

---

<sup>1</sup>Bower Marsh and John Ainsworth, eds., *Records of the Worshipful Company of Carpenters, V: Warden's Account Book 1571-1599* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1937); SRO, D593/R/1/2. This was approximately twice the rate paid for unskilled garden labourers, recorded at 8d a day by the Carpenters Company and at Trentham Hall, while in 1626 Sir John Oglander records payments of 8d and 9d per day to estate workers or ‘laborers that I kepe aworke all the yeare’ at Nunwell: IOWRO, OG/AA/27, fols 47, 52

<sup>2</sup> Munby, *Early Stuart Household Accounts*, pp. xix, 200.

<sup>3</sup> See **Figure 66**, p. 304 below.

recompensed for his knowledge and skill, recognised as having served his apprenticeship and learned his trade from a master.<sup>4</sup>

Other evidence of their standing is revealed by the fact that Richard, the gardener employed by Sir Thomas Temple to build his garden at Burton Dassett was apparently in a position to dictate his own terms - he could come to Burton Dassett for a few days only, when he was available. Elsewhere, Temple writes 'I would have Richard sett or sow what he thincketh best', clearly content to trust his judgement.<sup>5</sup> Examples such as this indicate that gardeners could earn a good reputation, locally at least, and that their superior skills and knowledge were respected by those who hired them. Finally on this point, frequent references in household accounts simply to 'work in the garden' or 'to the gardener', where individual tasks are rarely specified, indicate the degree of autonomy that was accorded to this area of expertise.

The qualities of the ideal gardener are discussed by various contemporary gardening authors: Hyll states that a 'fruitfull and pleasant Garden can not be had without the good skyl and diligent minde of the Gardener'; according to Gervase Markham, the gardener is required to possess 'three especiall vertues, that is to say, Diligence, Industry, and Art' but notes that whilst the art can be taught, the first two virtues must be 'reaped from

---

<sup>4</sup> Welch, *History of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners*, p. 17. There is little extant information regarding gardening apprenticeships: how they may have been regulated before the establishment of the Gardeners' Company in 1605 is a moot point and in any case the jurisdiction of the Company only ever extended to six miles beyond the City of London. Christopher Brooks has pointed out that statutory regulations were never systematically enforced in smaller towns and villages and therefore there are few records of apprenticeships in rural areas which would, of course, have included the majority gardening apprenticeships. For this and a more general discussion of apprenticeships between 1550 and 1650, see Christopher Brooks, 'Apprenticeship, Social mobility and the Middling Sort, 1550-1800' in *The Middling Sort of People*, Barry and Brooks, pp. 54-62.

<sup>5</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2284, STT2296



Nature’, for without this love and labour in his blood ‘it is impossible he should ever prove an absolute gardiner’. William Lawson cites the qualities of the ideal gardener as ‘religious, honest, ‘skilfull’.<sup>6</sup> He also stresses the importance of rewarding the good gardener well for his work: not only will he receive his wages, but these should be augmented with surplus produce from the garden after the house has been served. It does seem, that however expressed, the gardener was expected to possess certain skills and qualities over and above those of the ordinary labourer or estate worker and clearly, good gardeners were to be sought out and retained.

Evidence of a growing recognition of the specialist skills of the gardener comes early in the seventeenth century when the Worshipful Company of Gardeners received its first Royal Charter in 1605. At this time, the term ‘gardener’ embraced a wide range of occupations engaged in ‘the trade, crafte, or misterie of Gardening’ including botanists, florists, fruit-growers, herbalists, horticulturalists, market gardeners, nurserymen, plant merchants, seedsmen and sowers, as well as those we would call simply ‘gardeners’.<sup>7</sup> The main motivation in the setting up of the Company was to regulate practice and prevent ‘ignorant and unskilful persons’, who had not been apprenticed to the trade, selling ‘dead and corrupt plants, seeds, stockes and trees’ thereby damaging the reputations of genuine gardeners and under-mining the ‘misterie’ of gardening.<sup>8</sup> At the same time, aligning themselves alongside other trade guilds and livery companies must also be seen as an attempt to elevate the status of the gardener and the activity of gardening on a par with

---

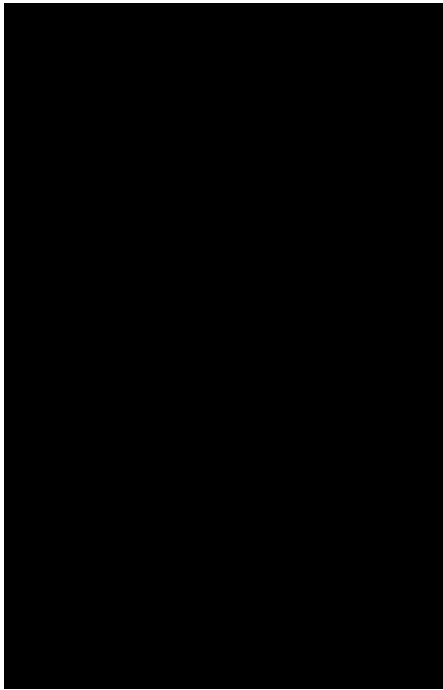
<sup>6</sup> Hyll, *The Profitable Art of Gardening* (1579), sig. C; Markham, *English Husbandman*, p. 105; Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, pp. 1-2[35-6]

<sup>7</sup> Melvyn Barnes, *Root and Branch: A History of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners* (London: Worshipful Company of Gardeners of London, 1994), p. 31

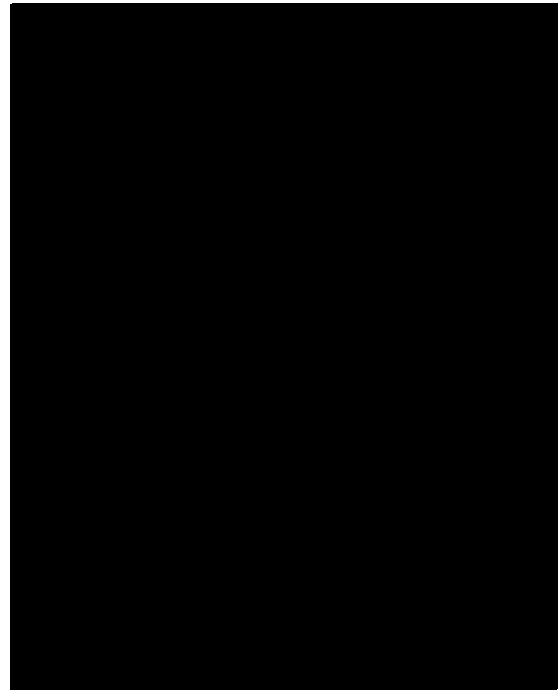
<sup>8</sup> Welch, *History of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners*, p. 22

other skilled crafts such as joinery, masonry or carpentry. Having said this however, in the early years at least, the influence of the Gardeners' Company was limited: it appears that its major concern was to protect the trade of those in the business of producing and selling foodstuffs, plants and seeds and its jurisdiction was restricted to those working within a six mile radius of the City of London. Whether or not it was to have any impact on gardeners working in the provinces is debatable, and as has been shown above, the role of the gardener on rural estates seems little changed over the period.

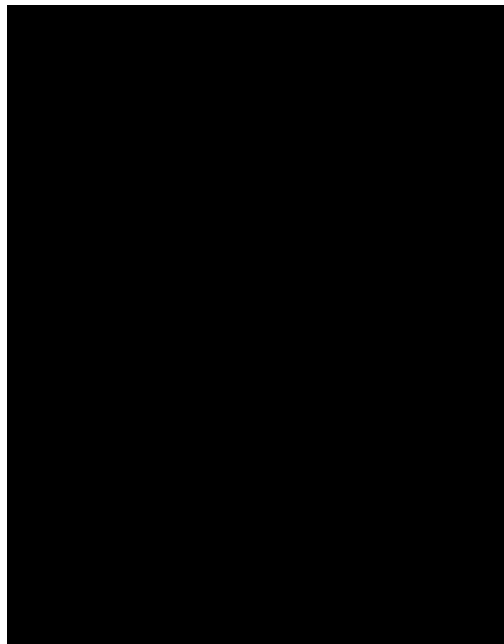
Into this discussion we now have to try and place figures such as John Gerard, John Parkinson and the John Tradescants. What was their role as gardeners and how do they fit into the general picture described above? Although one of the reasons that these men are so well known is because they left behind them written records of their work, the fact is that these were no ordinary gardeners. They were all men at the top of their tree: John Gerard superintended the creation of William Cecil's garden at Theobalds, John Parkinson was appointed Royal Botanist to Charles I and Tradescant the elder worked on the creation of Robert Cecil's gardens at Hatfield House and was keeper of the Royal gardens at Oatlands Palace. On his death, his son took over this royal appointment which he held until the palace was demolished in 1650. In addition, they all had renowned gardens of their own which, by all accounts, they cultivated themselves. Their reputations then, were built on their real skills and knowledge as gardeners. As has already been discussed in the case of John Parkinson, this is clearly reflected in their portraits (see **Figures 62, 63 and 64** over). Parkinson is depicted holding a Sweet William flower, John Gerard is similarly holding a potato plant and John Tradescant's posthumous portrait is encircled with flowers, fruit and vegetables.



**Figure 62** Portrait of John Parkinson  
from *Paradisi in Sole* (1629)



**Figure 63** Portrait of John Gerard  
from *The Herball* (1597)



**Figure 64** Portrait of John Tradescant,  
attributed to Cornelius de Neve, date unknown.  
From Leith-Ross, *The John Tradescants*, Plate 1

Having noted this however, it is interesting that in no case was gardening their only occupation and none profess gardening as their trade. John Gerard's portrait announces him as a surgeon and a member of the Company of Barber Surgeons and Parkinson was a member of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries. John Tradescant was employed in many and varied roles throughout his life and Tradescant the Younger is described by a contemporary as having 'virtually given up these studies [botany] and now maintains trade with the Canary Islands.'<sup>9</sup> Admittedly, Parkinson, as far as we know, never actually earned his living from gardening, apart from writing about it, but John Gerard and the John Tradescants most certainly did. So what are we to make of this and where does this lead in tracing the elevation of the status of the gardener and gardening? Are we at any point able to talk about 'professional' gardeners or the 'profession' of gardening?<sup>10</sup>

Further investigation into the career paths of these eminent gardeners reveals a number of important points relevant to this discussion. All of these men come from relatively lowly backgrounds. In the case of Gerard, nothing is known about his family background or parentage. The only clues as to where he was born are from an entry in the *Herball* where in describing the bramble 'Rapis' [raspberry] Gerard relates that as a child he found it growing wild near 'where I went to school, two miles from Nantwich in Cheshire'.<sup>11</sup> In his

---

<sup>9</sup> Leith-Ross, *The John Tradescants*, pp.78, 82,116

<sup>10</sup> Applying the term 'professional' to occupations of this period is problematic as the words profession, trade and craft were used apparently interchangeably by contemporaries, either in a very wide sense to describe a person's occupation, whatever that was, or in the much more restricted sense of the three learned professions of the clergy, law and medicine. The role of the professions in early modern England has been discussed at length by modern historians, but the general conclusion is that, outside of the three recognised and established professions, the distinction between profession, trade and craft was very blurred indeed, the concept having by this time 'acquired a convenient breadth and ambiguity': Wilfred Prest, ed., *The Professions in Early Modern England* (London: Croom Helm, 1987), p. 12. See also Geoffrey Holmes, *Augustan England: Professions, State and Society, 1680-1730* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982); Rosemary O'Day, *The Professions in Early Modern England 1480-1800* (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2000);

<sup>11</sup> Gerard, *Herball*, p. 1089

portrait he uses a coat of arms which could possibly link him to the Gerard's of Ince in Cheshire. The next we hear of him is in London, having been apprenticed to the Barber-Surgeons' Company, of which he was made a freeman in 1569.<sup>12</sup> By 1577 he must have begun working for William Cecil: in his dedication to Lord Burghley at the beginning of his *Herball*, Gerard writes 'under your Lordship I have served [...] now by the space of twenty years'.<sup>13</sup> How he made his acquaintance is unknown, but in order to be employed by so illustrious a person as Lord Burghley, who held one of the highest offices of state in the land, Gerard must have already earned his reputation as a gardener of note. At the same time, he was also establishing his reputation as a herbalist and as a surgeon: in 1586 he was appointed as curator of a physic garden to be set up by the College of Physicians and in 1595 the Company of Barber-Surgeons elected him to the court of assistants. In 1607 he was chosen as Master.<sup>14</sup> There are obvious links between the work of the surgeon (and, of course, the apothecary) and a knowledge of the plants which would have been used for pain relief during operations, but it is interesting that Gerard's apprenticeship and 'profession' was as a surgeon, not as a gardener.<sup>15</sup>

Of course, one reason for this is that the Company of Gardeners' was not established until 1606, so apprenticeship to or membership of this company was not even an option for Gerard, or indeed Parkinson after him. There is evidence to indicate that one way of attaining 'professional' status was through membership of a company and that to be

---

<sup>12</sup> *Oxford DNB* [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10555](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10555) [accessed 12 March 2008]

<sup>13</sup> Gerard, *Herball*, Epistle Dedicatorie, [p. 2]

<sup>14</sup> *Oxford DNB* [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10555](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10555) [accessed 12 March 2008]

<sup>15</sup> Thomas Hyll, in *The Profitable Art of Gardening* (1579) attempts to elevate the 'arte' of gardening by linking it to 'noble Artes, both Phisicke and Surgerie' neither of which can be performed with the third [arte] of gardening to produce the necessary herbs and medicines: Hyll, Epistle to Sir Henrie Seamer, sig. Aii-Aii<sup>v</sup>.

admitted as a member of a company was a sign that one had achieved gentry status.<sup>16</sup> For a man in Gerard's position who began life, at best, on the margins of gentility, apprenticeship and membership of a company would have been one assured route to a rise in status. Additionally, there was an order of civic precedence for livery companies, mainly based on wealth, which determined both prestige and potential income for apprentices and members: the Company of Barber Surgeons and even more so the Company of Grocers, to whom Parkinson was apprenticed, were among the most important.<sup>17</sup> Allying themselves as they did to one of the major livery companies will also have enhanced their position in society.<sup>18</sup>

The career of John Parkinson from apprentice apothecary to Royal Botanist has already been explored, but like Gerard, little is known of his background and early life. A recent biography has shown that it is likely that he came from a Lancashire farming family - the coat of arms displayed in his portrait being traced to a farmhouse near Whalley, probably purchased in the time of Henry VIII.<sup>19</sup> Again how he came to London is unknown, but by 1584 he was signed up as an apprentice to Francis Slater, a freeman of the Company of Grocers.<sup>20</sup> As far as it is known, although gardening remained a passion throughout his life, forming the basis of his work as an apothecary as well as the basis for his two

---

<sup>16</sup> For more on freeman defined as professionals and gentlemen, see Kenneth Charlton, 'The Professions in Sixteenth Century England', *University of Birmingham Historical Journal*, 12 (1969), 20-41; Steve Rea and Richard Cust, Courts of Chivalry website <http://www.court-of-chivalry.bham.ac.uk> [accessed 16 June 2011], Case 367, Leming v Clopton; Steven Rappaport, *Worlds within Worlds: Structures of Life in Sixteenth-century London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 258-9

<sup>17</sup> William Hazlitt, *The Livery Companies of the City of London* (New York: B. Blom, 1969), p. 84; Brooks, 'Apprenticeship, social mobility and the Middling Sort', p. 60; Barnes, *Root and Branch*, p. 22

<sup>18</sup> The Gardeners Company, once established, was a minor company, ranked 66th in order of precedence and in fact, although the ordinances provided for a livery, it was never actually granted by the Court of Aldermen. Neither did it ever possess a Hall: Barnes, *Root and Branch*, p. 22; Welch, *The History of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners*, p. 29

<sup>19</sup> Anna Parkinson, *Nature's Alchemist*, pp. 15-16

<sup>20</sup> At this time, neither the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries nor the Company of Gardeners' were established.

published works, the first dedicated to Queen Henrietta Maria and the second to King Charles 1, like Gerard, his professional status was defined by his occupation as an apothecary, not as a gardener.

John Tradescant's background is similarly obscure, but we do know that by 1610, at the age of 40, he was working as a gardener at Hatfield House, having clearly established his reputation as a plantsman by this time. As well as his plant-collecting exploits, already recounted, and before moving into the employ of the Duke of Buckingham in 1624 and thence to establish his garden and museum in Lambeth, he worked for Lord Wotton as his gardener at St Augustines in Canterbury, where his son attended the King's School for four years.<sup>21</sup> As far as we know, he was never apprenticed to any particular trade, but evidence such as his purchase of adventurer shares in the Virginia Company indicates that he may have been a man of independent means, so although he clearly still needed to earn a living, perhaps he was more free to pursue his own interests without necessarily allying himself to a particular occupation. Tradescant the younger's reputation as a gardener appears to rest on his father's career, although he was admitted as a member of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners in 1634, most likely becoming a freeman by redemption, that is by buying his admittance rather than earning his place through servitude or patrimony.<sup>22</sup>

What is remarkable is how the lives of these men followed very similar paths, rising from apparently humble backgrounds to royal or near-royal appointment. They all gained their reputations at the time through their work and service and in perpetuity through their

---

<sup>21</sup> *Oxford DNB* [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27654](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27654); [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27655](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/27655) [both accessed 6 Feb 2008]

<sup>22</sup> Leith-Ross, *The John Tradescants*, p. 100

publications. They all adopted the use of a coat of arms, a visible sign of gentlemanly status and they were all, apart from Tradescant the elder, freeman of a livery company. And they achieved this not, as in earlier times, through blood, patronage and inherited wealth, but through a reputation and status earned through skill and hard work, the changing times allowing them to rise through the social hierarchy and take their place as professional gentlemen, although apparently not yet as professional gardeners.

It has been argued that it was to be the end of the century before landscape gardeners, along with other 'nascent' professionals such as surveyors, architects and artists were to emerge to serve the needs of aspiring gentlemen who wished to buy advice in order to furnish their houses and layout their gardens in the line with the latest fashions.<sup>23</sup> With the benefit of hindsight however, it could perhaps be said that in their advisory roles to the great and the good, men such as Gerard, Parkinson and Tradescant were in fact the precursors to these professional men. Whatever the case, they undoubtedly played their part in raising the status of gardening and the gardener in the earlier years of the century. It was, however, to be left to John Evelyn to make explicit this elevation in status of both the activity and the occupation of gardening and who was, as far as can be ascertained, the first person to refer to the art of gardening as a profession.

---

<sup>23</sup> Holmes, *Augustan England*, p. 21; Thomas, *The Ends of Life*, p. 131



## 5.2 Redefining the gardener?

In the first two chapters of his *Elysium Britannicum*, Evelyn ambitiously sets out to define (a) a garden, which he does by giving a potted history from the garden of Eden through classical Greece and Rome to the present day; (b) the art of gardening, ‘that glorious name and Profession’, which he describes as being both an art and a science; and (c) the gardener and ‘how he should be qualified’.<sup>24</sup>

What becomes immediately clear is that Evelyn’s aim appears to be to combine the dissemination of practical knowledge with his higher literary aspirations. As well as his many allusions to classical antiquity, Evelyn frequently lapses into Latin and Greek prose, not only emphasising his desire to establish the credentials of his subject matter by grounding it in ancient authority, but also setting his book apart from earlier English books on horticulture, which as we have seen, had a tendency towards practicality and accessibility. Whilst this led to some contemporary criticism that such an approach was distancing the work from its proper audience: ‘the countryman must go learn Latin and the poets to understand our author’ wrote the Yorkshire doctor, Nathaniel Johnson in 1666, this writer did at the same time recognise that perhaps this was Evelyn’s point, that in writing ‘scholar and gentleman like of this subject’ the purpose was ‘to make gentlemen in love with the study’.<sup>25</sup> As John Dixon Hunt has observed, the elevated literary style of *Elysium Britannicum* meant an elevated subject and is indicative of the high status to which Evelyn wished to raise the discourse of gardening.<sup>26</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup> Evelyn, *Elysium Britannicum*, pp. 29, 33, 35

<sup>25</sup> Cited in Michael Hunter, ‘A Virtuoso in Quest of a Role’, p. 103

<sup>26</sup> John Dixon Hunt, ‘Evelyn’s Idea of a Garden: A Theory for all Seasons’ in *John Evelyn’s ‘Elysium Britannicum’ and European Gardening*, ed. by O’Malley & Wolschke-Bulmahn, pp. 269-288 (p. 270)

At this point it is worth recalling Evelyn's connections with first the Hartlib Circle and then the Royal Society, scholarly networks which enabled the free exchange of intellectual ideas, their common emphasis being on the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge through experimental natural philosophy, or science.<sup>27</sup> In his history of the Royal Society, Michael Hunter points to both an intricate network of scientific correspondents and an 'assembly of Gentlemen' drawn from various occupations and backgrounds who made up its members, noting that membership of the Society always represented social prestige although not always an interest in science.<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless, this does not detract from the fact that the pursuit of scientific knowledge, in its broadest sense, was viewed as a learned, gentlemanly pursuit. It is within this context that John Evelyn's work on *Elysium Britannicum* must be set.

Evelyn's definition of the gardener as 'a person skillfull in the Arte of Gardening' is not particularly ground-breaking, but his discussion of the necessary qualifications is certainly more interesting. As well as being ingenious, diligent and patient - the kind of qualities already noted by other authors, for Evelyn, the gardener must now also be skilful in drawing, designing, geometrics, optics, astrology and medicine, all technical skills that require a degree of 'bookish' learning and identified by Geoffrey Holmes as one of the factors which distinguished a profession from a trade or craft.<sup>29</sup> Later in the book, Evelyn discusses and illustrates in detail over seventy implements and other paraphernalia 'Since

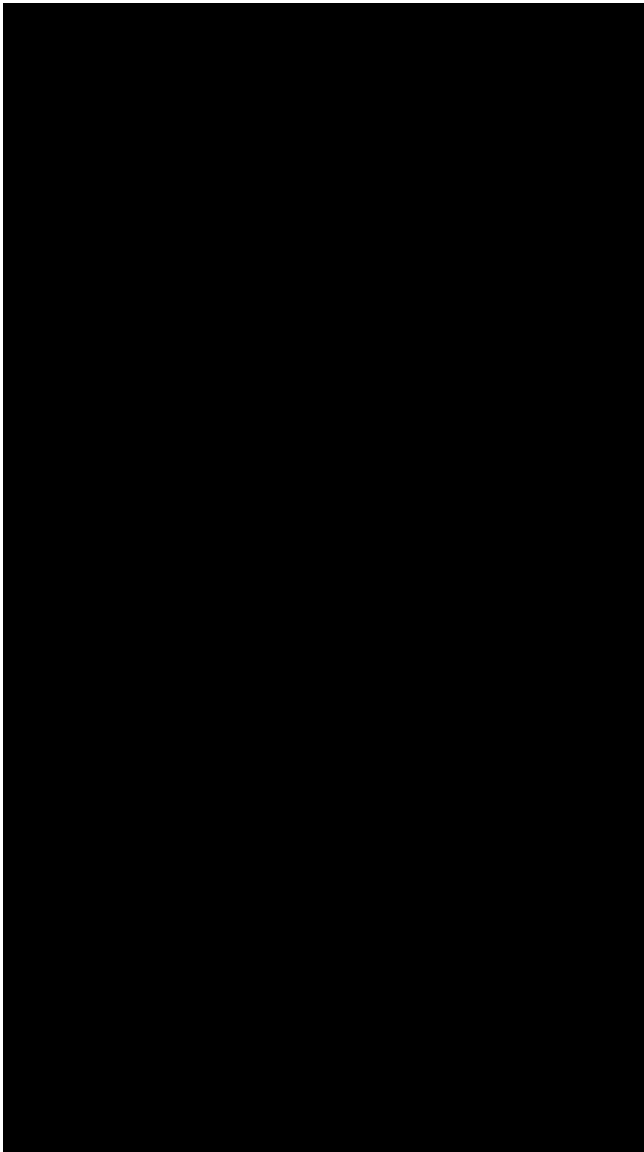
---

<sup>27</sup> Leslie and Raylor, *Culture and Cultivation in Early Modern England*, pp. 4, 8; Hunter, *Establishing the New Science*, p. 1

<sup>28</sup> Michael Hunter, *The Royal Society and its Fellows, 1600-1700* (Chalfont St. Giles: British Society for the History of Science, 1982), pp. 2-10. Quentin Skinner takes this view even further and has likened the Royal Society to a Gentleman's club, although Hunter describes this view as extreme: Quentin Skinner, 'Thomas Hobbs and the nature of the early Royal Society', *The Historical Journal*, 12, No. 2 (1969), 217-239 (p. 238)

<sup>29</sup> Holmes, *Augustan England*, p. 8

Gardining [...] hath, as all other Arts and Professions certain instruments and tooles properly belonging to it'. As well as the spades, rakes, shears, wheelbarrows and so on that we would expect, he also includes levels, rulers, compasses, 'a Drawing-poynt to trace and design' and a table for plotting and setting out patterns.<sup>30</sup>



**Figure 65** Detail from John Evelyn,  
*Instruments Presented to the Eye*, date unknown  
from Evelyn, *Elysium Britannicum*, p. 90

By suggesting the necessity for such an array of specialist equipment he is at the same time implying the education to know how to use them and the means with which to purchase them. What Evelyn is doing is making a distinction between the professional gentleman

---

<sup>30</sup> Evelyn, *Elysium Britannicum*, pp. 84-91

gardener and the working gardener, and he does this very explicitly. He goes on to list three further prerequisites to define his gardener, which may well reside in at least two if not three different persons: 'First, a good purse; Secondly, a judicious Eye; and thirdly, a skillful hand'. The first is the person at whose charge and for whom the garden is made; the second (who may well be the same person) is the 'surveyor' under whose directions the garden is contrived:

yet is he in truth, *properly, The Gardiner*, by way of excellency, as in whome all the fore mentioned accomplishments concurr and center.<sup>31</sup>

The third are the labourers or workmen who bring the work to 'its final perfection'. By establishing the status of what he refers to as 'properly, The Gardiner' on a par with professionals such as architects and surveyors, Evelyn is again seeking to elevate gardening as an elite activity: 'the Gentlemen of our Nation may not thinke it any diminution to the rest of their education, if to be dignified with the Title of Good-Gardiner'.<sup>32</sup>

Within this new intellectual framework, Evelyn is drawing distinctions which establish a (new) hierarchy of gardeners from the learned gentleman who is equipped with the education and knowledge to pursue gardening alongside other higher intellectual pursuits and the middling practitioners (such as Gerard, Parkinson and Tradescant) who approach it as a skill specific to itself. He is dignifying gardening as a liberal rather than a mechanical art, establishing it as a fitting occupation for a gentleman.

---

<sup>31</sup> Evelyn, *Elysium Britannicum*, p. 35 (my emphasis)

<sup>32</sup> Evelyn, *Elysium Britannicum*, p. 35

There is just one problem with all this and that is, despite all Evelyn's lofty aspirations, there is evidence that gentlemen had been engaged in gardening, to a certain degree at least, for a long time.

### 5.3 Gentleman Gardeners

So who were these gardeners? Having considered those who earned their living, in whatever capacity, as gardeners, we also need to consider the role of the garden owners themselves in maintenance of their gardens. These gardeners tend to be less well-documented as their activities are not recorded in household accounts or wages bills because obviously they were not paid, so we have to rely on other sources for our evidence. In the first instance, contemporary literature offers a number of clues.

As we have already noted, William Lawson begins his book with advice on the importance of choosing the right gardener, but having extolled the virtues of the perfect example, we realise that this is not the gardener for whom Lawson is writing his book. He ends the chapter by offering an alternative:

If you be not able, nor willing to hire a gardner, keep your profits to your self, but then you must take all the pains: and for that purpose (if you want this faculty) to instruct you, have I undertaken these labours, and gathered these rules.<sup>33</sup>

He appears to be drawing a clear distinction between 'the gardner' who knows his art well enough not to need further instruction, and the garden owner who may want to learn to do some of this work himself – always of course with 'good help [...] for no one man is sufficient for these things'.<sup>34</sup> His book appears to be addressed to the householder who

---

<sup>33</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, p. 2

<sup>34</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, p. 2

would garden, rather than the gardener by trade. It seems to be aimed at people like himself – that is, country gentry of some learning, but who are involved at a practical level in the husbanding of their land. The fact that it was being written at this particular time suggests a new need for such a book because gardening, as has been established, was now becoming an acceptable activity for the seventeenth-century gentleman and like other contemporary advice books, such as Henry Peacham's '*The Compleat Gentleman*' perhaps offered another facet on how to live such a life.<sup>35</sup> Lawson's book proved very popular, numerous editions being published between 1618 and the end of the century and it has to be assumed that some of its readers at least were putting what they read into practice. Garden owners clearly were involving themselves to some extent in the cultivation of their gardens.

Evidence in John Parkinson's book is much more specific. In his chapter on grafting in the orchard he states:

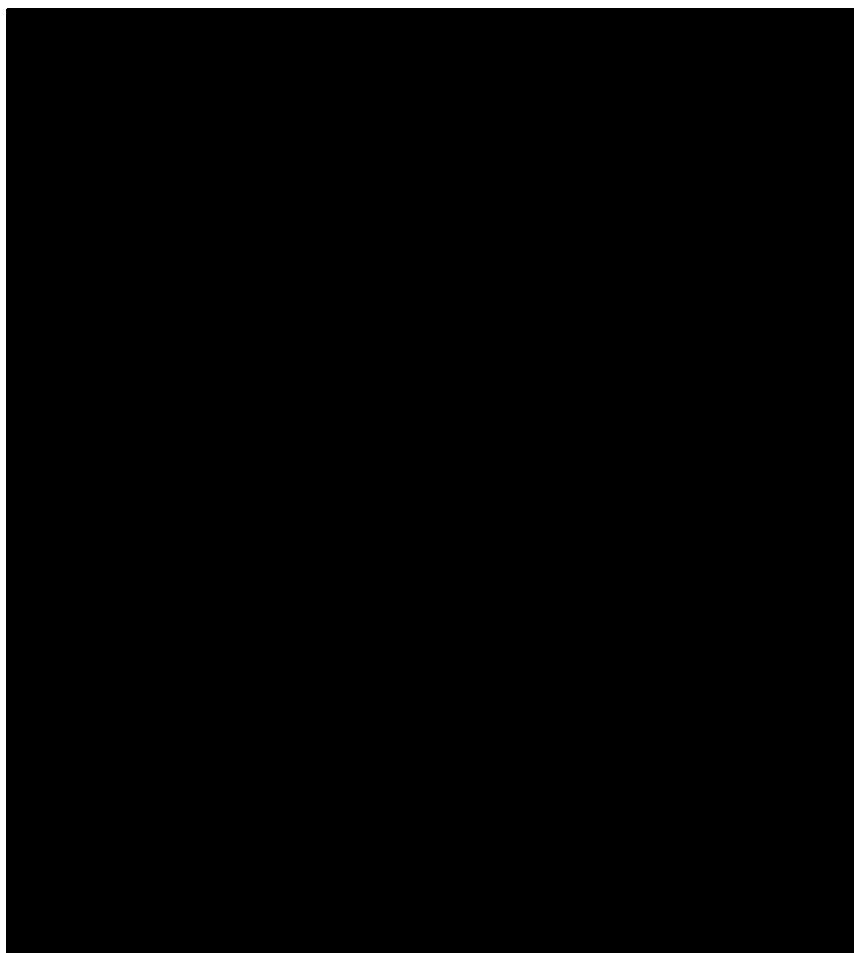
yet because many Gentlemen and others are much delighted to bestowe their paines in grafting themselves, and esteeme their owne labours and handie work farr above other mens: for their encouragement and satisfaction, I will here set down some convenient directions.<sup>36</sup>

This seems unequivocal – despite that fact that gardeners were employed on most country estates, there were nevertheless gentlemen who engaged in hands-on gardening, sometimes because it was a more economical option, as implied by Lawson above, sometimes because they feel that have the greater skill, as Parkinson seems to be saying, and sometimes, as will be shown, for their own pleasure. Examination of a range of other contemporary sources helps to give substance to this notion of the gentleman gardener.

---

<sup>35</sup> Henry Peacham, *The Compleat Gentleman* (London, 1622)

<sup>36</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 538



**Figure 66 Portrait of Sir Thomas Wentworth and his family, c. 1575**  
from John Harvey, *Early Nurserymen*, Plate 2

This portrait, dating from about 1575, shows Thomas Wentworth, grandfather to the Earl of Strafford, seated in his garden holding in one hand a tree stock into which grafts have been inserted and in the other hand a grafting saw and a chisel or knife.<sup>37</sup> There is another tree stock by his left foot into which grafts have also been inserted. Behind him stands the gardener, who is holding a bundle of grafts in one hand and some kind of garden tool in the other. Wentworth's wife, daughter and dog are standing to the left of the picture, in front of the family house and gardens at Wentworth Woodhouse.<sup>38</sup> The significance of this is not

---

<sup>37</sup> Identified from a contemporary illustration in Leonard Mascall's *A Book of the Arte and maner, howe to plant and graffe all sortes of trees*, sig. Ciiij

<sup>38</sup> John Harvey, *Early Nurserymen*, notes to Plate 2, between pp. 50-51

just that we have visual evidence of a gentleman actively engaged in gardening, but perhaps even more telling is that it is this aspect of his life that Wentworth has chosen to be depicted in this family portrait – it clearly was something of great importance to him, a skill of which he was particularly proud and an activity which he considered to be fitting to his status. It is interesting too that this portrait is dated considerably earlier than the garden manuals quoted above (and well before Evelyn attempts to define his gentleman gardener), indicating that this was not a new phenomenon, but that these were skills and abilities with a long and respectable pedigree. It is worth noting of course that of all the work in the garden, grafting is not only a skilled task, but it doesn't involve a great deal of physical effort or getting your hands dirty. Wentworth is seated on a chair and the gardener is at his shoulder to provide the necessary equipment and presumably if required, advice. Whilst it could just about be described as manual labour, it's hardly up there with digging and muck-spreading!

It is with this in mind perhaps that we should approach our next piece of evidence. In 1631, Sir John Oglander wrote in his memorandum book

I have with my owne handes planted 2 younge Orchardes at Nunwell, the lower with Pippen, Pearmaynes, Puttes [?Harnyes] and other good aples, and all sortes of good pears[.] in the other Cherryes, Damsons and Plumes, in the upor garden Apricockes, Melecatouns and figges.

Elsewhere he writes:

When I came to Nunwell I fownd not one Quince Tree, wherefor I sett at leaste 100 trees, being all Portingale quinces. There was neither any good Aple, Cherrye, Plum, Peare, Apricocke, Melicatoone, Figge or Vine. I planted them all, most with my own hands.<sup>39</sup>

---

<sup>39</sup> IOWRO, OG/AA/29, fols 29<sup>v</sup>, 34



Whether these are the same trees as he has already mentioned is difficult to tell, but more significantly, he mentions on both occasions that he has planted them himself - clearly this is not an activity which he regards as beneath him. And it has to be said that planting this many trees, even as saplings, is no mean feat. A man in Sir John's position must have had many calls on his time, but he has chosen to do this work of planting trees himself rather than having it done for him, presumably because this is what he wanted.<sup>40</sup> Sir John's actual role in this tree-planting is unclear, and it is of course likely that the hard work of actually digging the holes, filling them with muck and so on was done by the labourers who appear in the account books as being employed year round at Nunwell, engaged in such tasks as walling, hedging, ditching, digging and weeding. Oglander's contribution may simply have been limited to inserting the sapling into the prepared hole and then leaving someone else to finish the job. On the other hand however, as there does not appear to have been a gardener as such employed at Nunwell, it is perfectly possible that Sir John himself had the necessary knowledge, skill and interest to both oversee and actively participate in the creation and maintenance of his own garden. This idea is further reiterated in Sir John's writings, where he continues to display both a practical interest and knowledge of gardening and good husbandry. He gives very specific advice about the planting of an orchard for instance, including which varieties to choose, how best to manure the ground, how long to leave the rootstocks before using them for grafting and so on:

If you desyre to have a good orchard plant him first with Crabstockes  
as you woold have then stand for good: after 2 yeares then graff them:  
placing good earth about the rootes.

And again:

---

<sup>40</sup>He was appointed deputy governor of Portsmouth in 1620, deputy governor of the Isle of Wight in 1624, he sat in the parliaments of 1625, 1626 and 1628-9 and was commissioner and then sheriff of Hampshire from 1635-39: *Oxford DNB* [www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20604](http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20604) [accessed 28 May 2008]

Piginsdoonge or Lime with good earth or asches is good: the grownde  
is so Base and Barren that without helpe nothing can prove'.<sup>41</sup>

Whether he is talking generally here or specifically about the ground at Nunwell is difficult to tell, but asking the question does remind us that unlike garden writers such as William Lawson and John Parkinson who offer similar advice, Sir John is not writing a book for publication to a wider audience: he is giving specific advice to his descendants about how to make the best of this specific place, that is the family estate at Nunwell. He writes a long treatise entitled 'Observations in Howsbanderie' of which he says 'if thou beest not skilled thie selve [,] make use of them and be sure to follow them t[i]ll experience hath taught thee better'.<sup>42</sup> We can only assume that this is how Sir John acquired his knowledge, through his own experience, which he is now passing on to his descendants. Whilst good estate management would necessarily have been the concern of many rural gentlemen, in Sir John Oglander, his intensely practical advice does indicate direct involvement on his part and, as we noticed in the case of Sir Thomas Wentworth, it is possible to discern a degree of pride in his horticultural achievements.<sup>43</sup> His similar interest in his ornamental flower garden has already been noted.

Sir Thomas Temple's memorandum books and correspondence also reveal a close involvement in the management of the estate lands and orchards at Burton Dassett, his many letters to his estate steward Harry Rose indicating his knowledge and expertise. As has been extensively discussed elsewhere, he was particularly heavily involved in his latter

---

<sup>41</sup> IOWRO, OG/AA/27, fols 80, 86

<sup>42</sup> IOWRO, OG/AA/28

<sup>43</sup> In the same way, Sir John Reresby in his Garden Notebook lists 'The Names of the severall Trees planted by my selfe in my Orchards & Gardens at Thrybergh: Begunne 1633'.<sup>43</sup> Like Sir John Oglander, Reresby too clearly considers it worthy of note that he planted the trees himself: Woudstra and O'Halloran, 'Sir John Reresby's Garden Notebook', p. 160

years in the creation and planning of the new paled garden at Dassett. He issues very precise instructions about how exactly he wants the garden to look and what should be planted in it, as well as equally precise instruction regarding the preparation of the ground: ‘the workemen are to caste one spitt of the uppermost earth upon or toward the said South wall’ or again, the earth should be cast up toward the Privy hedges and ‘if the ground on which the plantes are sett, were stoared with gardine stuffe also, the plantes would prosper the better’ and so on.<sup>44</sup> Again, this would indicate a degree of ‘hands-on’ knowledge and expertise on such matters. It would seem almost certain that Sir Thomas maintained an active interest in his garden throughout the remainder of his life.

The gardening activities of Sir Thomas Hanmer and John Evelyn have been dealt with at length - suffice to note here that in both cases their plans, notebooks and correspondence all point to active participation in the creation and maintenance of their gardens.

Of course, not all garden owners showed such an active interest. Gentlemen such as Sir Richard Leveson for instance, who appeared, from the evidence available at least, to have no particular interest in gardening, were quite happy to leave everything to the gardener, their role being limited to paying the bills. As long as the end result met their expectations in terms of looking good and creating the right impression, they were content. However, this was a matter of personal choice and does not detract from the notion that gentleman gardeners were clearly alive and well and gardening in early modern England.

---

<sup>44</sup> HL, Temple MSS, STT2284, STT2296

#### 5.4 'A fitt place for any Gentleman': Gardens as symbols of status and identity

Finally, having discussed the status of gardeners and the status of the activity of gardening, what of the gardens themselves? How did garden owners, when they spent time in their gardens, view what they had created? There are two aspects that need to be considered here: the material aspects, that is the actual gardens and the ornaments and plants within them, for which we have examined a great deal of evidence; and the more abstract aspects, for which, inevitably, evidence is a little more elusive. Once again, contemporary literature proves a useful starting point.

John Parkinson's observation that 'Gentlemen of the better sort and quality, will provide such a parcell of ground to bee laid out for their Garden [...] as may be fit and answerable to the degree they hold' has already been noted. For Parkinson, status and gardens went hand in hand: the way a garden was laid out and the plants with which it was furnished made a statement about the owner's standing in society. He saw it, in other words, as a measure of gentility. He makes a number of references to this throughout *Paradisi in Sole*, for instance suggesting that 'outlandish flowers' – rare and costly plants from abroad – were greatly desired and accepted as the most choice by 'the better sort of Gentry of the Land'.<sup>45</sup> The growth in consumption of luxury goods in early modern England has been well-documented and as Keith Thomas succinctly observes 'the consumption of goods gave visual expression to the social hierarchy'.<sup>46</sup> As has been noted before, exotic flowers were one example of a luxury item, defined as such by their cost, their rarity, their beauty and their purely ornamental value, that could be fittingly displayed in the gardens of the gentry. Sir John Oglander provides the oft-used example of his purchase of French flowers

---

<sup>45</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, pp. 3, 8

<sup>46</sup> Thomas, *The Ends of Life*, p. 118. For a fuller discussion of this, see pp. 61-62 above.

and tulips on which he spent more money than was wise; Sir Thomas Hanmer too was prepared to pay large sums for particularly desirable plants and flowers.

It should also be remembered that the cost of plants comprised of more than just the initial sum paid for the bulb or root: a great deal of time and money was expended, for instance, on their transport and in some cases, the expertise required to tend exotic plants also had to be bought in. In 1622, Sir Thomas Aubrey not only had to pay for the carriage of tender fruit trees from London to his home in South Wales, but also for someone to plant them.<sup>47</sup>

The cost of the plants purchased by John Tradescant for Robert Cecil was considerably increased by the cost of transporting them from many destinations around Europe to Hatfield House, not to mention of course, the salary paid to Tradescant himself for undertaking this task over many months.<sup>48</sup> There is evidence too that French gardeners were employed by wealthy gentlemen, presumably because they had valuable knowledge of foreign plants and garden fashions that would not yet have reached their English counterparts: this too must have conferred a degree of status on their employers.<sup>49</sup>

To have exotic plants growing in your garden then gave away a great deal about one's standing in society, implying the wealth to purchase the plant in the first place; the time, effort and expense involved in delivery, planting and maintenance; the surplus wealth and leisure time necessary to indulge in the purely ornamental. There was also too, as hinted at by Parkinson, a question of taste. Keith Thomas notes that taste first acquired prominence

---

<sup>47</sup> Bowen, *The Household Accounts of Sir Thomas Aubrey*, p. 55

<sup>48</sup> Leith-Ross, *The John Tradescants*, p. 35

<sup>49</sup> The household accounts of Francis Carew of Beddington for 1570 include four references to French gardeners and Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester employed a French gardener at Kew who is mentioned in the household accounts for 1599. In a postscript to a letter sent to Paris in September 1561, William Cecil asks for 'anything meet for the orchard or garden and an apt man for the same': Phillips and Burnett, 'Francis Carew's Garden at Beddington', pp. 159, 161

in the late seventeenth century, when gentlemen once again had to redefine their position above the rising middling class. The wealth required for the conspicuous accumulation of goods was no longer enough to affirm status, it now had to be accompanied by a capacity for discrimination, which was only possible through education and experience.<sup>50</sup> This assertion would imply that taste was not an issue in the early part of the century, but an element of this can, I think, already be detected. John Parkinson offers to educate his readers in matters of taste, recognising that many do not know ‘what to choose, or what to desire’ and he will therefore select for them flowers for the garden that are ‘fairest for shew’.<sup>51</sup>

Elsewhere he is judgmental about various contemporary trends in the garden, observing disapprovingly for instance of one method of bordering knots (with ‘leade [...] cut out like unto the battlements of a Church’) that ‘this fashion hath delighted some, who have accounted it stately (at the least costly) and fit for their degree’.<sup>52</sup> Although his disapproval lies in the lack of practicality of the method, he is nevertheless scathing of those who make a choice based purely on cost, revealing, such is the implication, a lack of judgement and good taste.

This also reminds us that gardens were not just show places for flowers: layout and ornament were just as important. The degree to which gardens had to be altered and reshaped in order to conform to the ideal was obviously indicative of the amount of time and money the owner was prepared to spend. For most people, such an expense was out of

---

<sup>50</sup> Thomas, *The Ends of Life*, pp. 129-131. This is reminiscent of the distinction being drawn by Evelyn between the intellectual gentleman gardener and the middling practitioners, discussed on page 295 above.

<sup>51</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, Epistle to the Reader

<sup>52</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 6

the question, but for those for whom it was not..... well, such a man could ‘please his owne fancie, according to the extent he designeth out for that purpose’.<sup>53</sup> The rebuilding of the gardens at Trentham Hall in the 1630s bear witness to this. Although we have little information about the plants that were eventually placed in the garden, as we have seen, an immense amount of work went into the building of the structural and ornamental elements of the garden, including seats, steps, gates, doors, windows, two ornamental pigeon houses and a fountain.<sup>54</sup> There is no evidence whatsoever that Sir Richard Leveson was interested in gardening, so it is reasonable to conclude that this garden was primarily about creating a space, in addition to the house, in which to show off wealth and status. In common with many such gardens at the time, it is likely that some parts at least were on public display and even those that were not would still have provided a suitable backdrop for ostentatious hospitality.<sup>55</sup> The finished result, and further evidence of this conclusion, can be glimpsed in the drawings included in Robert Plot’s *History of Staffordshire*.<sup>56</sup> The fact that two engravings of Trentham Hall are included, one specifically showing the layout of the gardens, would indicate that they were of some significance. In the first engraving, as previously observed, we see clearly depicted the final touches of Leveson’s grand design in the carving of the letters in the court wall leading up to the front of the house, coupling a Latinised version of his name, Richardus Leveson with that of King Charles I. The pretensions of using Latin have already been discussed above in relation to Evelyn; the implications of linking of one’s name with royalty are obvious. Together with the family

---

<sup>53</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 3

<sup>54</sup> See pp. 180-187 above

<sup>55</sup> As Sir Thomas Hanmer observes in his essay on gardening, ‘All florists [by whom he appears to mean gardeners such as himself who are avid collectors of flowering plants] have [...] publicke grounds, wherein all people of quality are admitted to walke’: NLW, Bettisfield 1667; see also Appendix 4

<sup>56</sup> See **Figures 35 and 36**, pp. 181, 182 above.

coat of arms painted at the entrance, Leveson was literally stamping his identity on his property, declaring his wealth and defining his status in the community.<sup>57</sup>

However, aside from these more obvious shows of wealth and status, what else can be learned about what their gardens meant to those who created, owned and maintained them? Chapter 1 dealt with the ‘profits and pleasures’ of gardening as illuminated in contemporary literature, discussing in detail the moral, intellectual and spiritual contexts within which the evidence presented in this thesis should be viewed and it is to this that we now need to return. It is worth recalling for instance William Lawson’s pleasure and delight in the results of his labours in his orchard and garden: ‘And who can deny but the Principall end of an Orchard, is the honest delight of one wearied with the workes of his lawfull calling?’<sup>58</sup> Sentiments such as this can be interpreted in a number of ways. Sir John Oglander for instance, immediately following his comments in his diaries about the foolishness of spending so much money on flowers for the garden, writes that it was his ‘Content’ when ‘wearyed with studdye, to solace my Selfe in the Garden And to see the spoorts of nature how in every several spetise [species] she sheweth her workmanshipp’. For him, his garden could be a place of retreat in which to contemplate the wonders of nature.<sup>59</sup> This is the reason that he gives for filling his garden with costly flowers – it is a place of refuge from the outside world in which he can admire, like Parkinson, the beauty of these plants for their own sake. Elsewhere, he advises ‘Fitt up thei gardens, Orchards and Walkes handsome about thee that thou mayest give Content both to thei selve and

---

<sup>57</sup> On 26<sup>th</sup> September 1635, the painter is paid for 9½ days work ‘paynting the Armes and scutchions at the hall doore’: SRO, D593/R/1/2

<sup>58</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, p. 52[86]

<sup>59</sup> IOWRO, OG/AA/29, fol. 25



wyfe to injoye the place'.<sup>60</sup> There is no doubt that this is a garden of pleasure, possibly to be shown off, but primarily to be enjoyed.

The case for the garden of pleasure being simply that, a place for enjoyment, can be made by further consideration of Sir Thomas Temple's parlour garden at Burton Dassett. As we have seen, this garden was less showy than some, and indeed there is little evidence that Sir Thomas was particularly concerned with showing off his garden at all. Nevertheless, to be able to indulge in creating an environment purely of sweet-smelling flowers, to produce such luxuries as grapes and apricots for the table or to be able to experiment with horticultural techniques, such as he did with his vine cuttings, without it really mattering whether or not they were successful – all this still represented an important assertion of his gentlemanly status which now gave him the time and the leisure to indulge, albeit in his old age, in the pleasures of gardening.

Sir Thomas Hanmer clearly took pleasure in both planning the layout of his garden as well as a life long interest in seeking out and collecting beautiful plants with which to furnish it. 'For these pleasures' wrote John Parkinson 'are the delights of leasure'.<sup>61</sup> Sir Thomas could surely have only agreed with him. For John Evelyn, his retreat to his garden at Sayes Court in the 1650s was possibly due to more pragmatic reasons, his active involvement in gardening becoming much more restricted in the Restoration period when he found himself once more in public office. For him, as must have been the case for many Royalist

---

<sup>60</sup> IOWRO, OG/AA/28, fol. 3

<sup>61</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 65

gentlemen (including Sir Thomas Hanmer), the garden represented a place of retreat and occupation during the difficult years of the Interregnum.<sup>62</sup> What all these examples reveal is the somewhat self-evident fact that gardens are seen in contrast to something else, be that literally as a place of rural or political retreat as opposed to the built up city or the shenanigans of court life, a place of rest as opposed to the busy workplace or whether at some higher level, the garden represents an escape to a better, purer, more morally upstanding environment, free from the corruptions of the outside world.<sup>63</sup> These ideas return us precisely to the definitions of a garden suggested in the opening to this thesis, that it is an enclosed space, separated from whatever may be going on outside of its boundaries.

For Lawson, there was pleasure in the labour as well as in the end result ‘View now with delight the works of your owne hands, your fruit trees of all sorts, loaden with sweet blossomes, and fruit of all tastes, operations and colours, your trees standing in comely order which way soever you look’.<sup>64</sup> As observed earlier in the cases of Wentworth, Oglander and Temple, he stresses the importance of actually doing some of the work yourself.<sup>65</sup> However, what Lawson really seems to be commenting on here is the satisfaction gained from creating order out of chaos and he comments elsewhere on the delight of flowers ‘comelily and orderly placed in your borders & squares’.<sup>66</sup>

---

<sup>62</sup> See for instance Evelyn, *Elysium Britannicum*, Introduction by John Ingram, p. 3; *Garden Book*, Introduction, p. xii; Heal and Holmes, *The Gentry in England and Wales*, p. 224; Martin Hoyles, *The Story of Gardening* (London: Journeyman Press, 1991), pp. 18-19

<sup>63</sup> For more on this see pp. 58-59 above.

<sup>64</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, p. 54[88]

<sup>65</sup> This is one area in which gardening occupies a unique and ambiguous position, being at the same time a pleasurable leisure activity, but one which invariably involves manual labour. Even today, digging the garden on a Sunday afternoon is seen by some as a pleasurable contrast to a hard week sitting at a desk!

<sup>66</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, p. 54[88]

This concern with orderliness is reminiscent of John Parkinson's desire in *Paradisi in Sole* not only to divide 'beautiful flower plants' from the 'wilde and unfit', but also to rank them one against another:

To satisfie therefore their desires that are lovers of such Delights, I took upon me this labour and charge, have selected and set forth a Garden of all the chieftest for choice, and fairest for shew, from among all the several Tribes and Kindreds of Natures beauty, and have ranked them as near as I could [...] in affinity to one another.<sup>67</sup>

What Parkinson was doing was much more than simply compiling a list of plant descriptions. He sought to distinguish the 'fit' from the 'unfit', to rank and order plants into a hierarchy according to affinities, advising the reader not only what to choose, but what to desire. In presenting the reader with an ideal of an ordered and ranked garden, he was also presenting them with a perception, whether real or not, of an ordered, ranked and stable world. This orderliness could be achieved, as Lawson also observed, through the art of gardening and it is difficult not to imagine that one of the roles of the gardener or the garden owner in creating a garden was to impose some order on unruly nature. In one small space that they could call their own, the gardener was in control, able to create an element of stability in an uncertain world. Sir John Oglander expresses this quite specifically:

Insomuch as of a rude Chaos I have now made it [the garden] a ffitt place for any Gentleman.<sup>68</sup>

However, this is not all. He continues:

and had hopes that my son George would have succeeded me and have Injoyed the fruites of my Labours.<sup>69</sup>

---

<sup>67</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, Epistle to the Reader

<sup>68</sup> The original transcription by Bamford states that the garden was made of a 'rude chase', an expression that has been perpetuated in secondary sources. However it seems to me that Sir John's use of the biblical word 'Chaos', as well as being quite clear, is also quite deliberate in that it serves to put his own description of what he has achieved on a much more elevated plane.

<sup>69</sup> IOWRO, OG/AA/29, f. 27<sup>v</sup>

This sentiment reminds us that one vital element of stability in the seventeenth-century world was the crucial importance of family lineage, a continuity that could be perpetuated through gardens and planting as well as anything else. Lawson ends his discourse on orchards and gardens thus:

To conclude, what joy may you have, that you [...] shall see the  
blessings of God on your labours while you live, and leave behind  
you heirs, or successors, such a work, that many ages after your death,  
shall record your love to their Countrey?<sup>70</sup>

One of the reasons that John Oglander built his garden was so that his descendants could enjoy the fruits of his labours and, as he puts it elsewhere, will ‘remember the fownder’.<sup>71</sup> The gardens, along with the house and lands that formed the rest of the estate, were an integral element of the inheritance of the Oglander family.

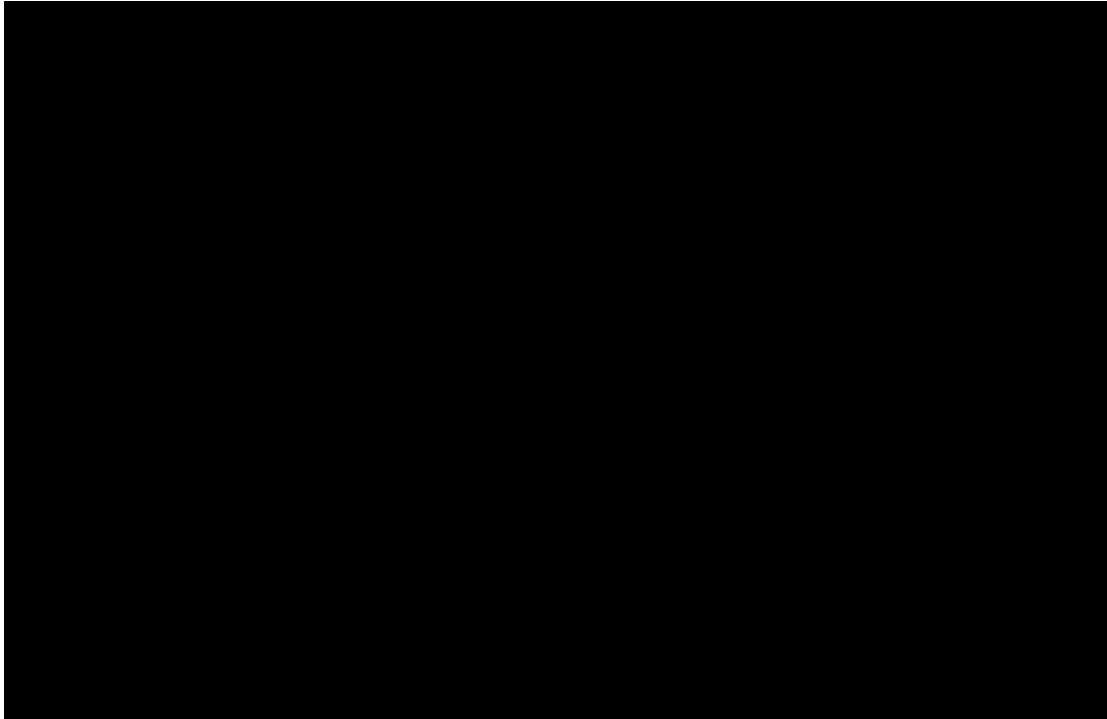
There is further evidence of Sir John’s preoccupation with his family heritage just down the road from Nunwell in the church of St Mary the Virgin at Brading. There, the Oglander Chapel contains the carved stone tombs of Sir John and his ancestors, still bearing witness to his desire to display, preserve and perpetuate the family lineage. The oldest tomb is of Sir John’s ancestor John Oglander who built the chapel in the 1500s and opposite this lies his son, Oliver, who according to Sir John’s notes, first acquired Nunwell House in 1522.<sup>72</sup> A wooden effigy of his grandson, and Sir John’s father, Sir William Oglander lies on his back atop a third tomb and opposite this is a second wooden effigy, lying on its side, representing Sir John himself. In a small niche above is a memorial to his son George, who ‘woold have succeded me’ but who died in July 1633 whilst abroad in France.

---

<sup>70</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, p. 56[90]

<sup>71</sup> IOWRO, OG/AA/29, f. 34

<sup>72</sup> IOWRO, OG/AA/14, ‘How Eastnunwell Came to the Oglanders’



**Figure 67 The tombs of Sir John Oglander and his son George,  
Church of St Mary the Virgin, Brading, Isle of Wight.**  
Photograph by author

The commissioning of these unusual, colourful wooden figures to commemorate himself and his family are detailed in Oglander's will, offering further evidence of Sir John's pride in his ancient descent.<sup>73</sup> Although Sir John was clearly devastated by the death of his son George – added to the paragraph under discussion above he writes, in a marginal note 'but he is gone my hopes are lost And with him my Care, Charge and Cost' – he did have a second son and the Nunwell estate, as he had wished, remained with his descendants for another three hundred years.

---

<sup>73</sup> *The Last Will and Testament of Sir John Oglander Knight written with his own hand November the tenth Anno Domini 1649*, [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documentsonline](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documentsonline) . See also Heal, *The Gentry in England and Wales*, pp. 20-23.

In the case of Sir John Oglander then, his garden was in many ways a representation of his ordered world: literally imposed by him when he took over and renovated the old house and gardens from his father, when he planted the trees and built the gardens. But also, his desire is to pass on the gardens to his descendants , as well as his knowledge and experience through his 'Observations' and letters, was clearly of vital importance to him, again representing his preoccupation with continuity and order in an uncertain world. His garden was to be enjoyed by himself and his wife, it was a place of solace and respite from wearing study and it was an integral part of his estate to be enjoyed by future generations of his family. As we have seen, some parts of the garden were filled with costly and showy flowers, which, as well as indulging his obvious enthusiasm for and pleasure in gardening, also indicated Sir John's awareness of its contribution to his standing in society. He had indeed, along with others of his gardening contemporaries, created 'a ffit place for any Gentleman'.



## CONCLUSIONS

‘Haveing already (I fear) tired the Reader with too tedious a travel  
through the vegetable kingdome, I forbear their recitall’<sup>1</sup>

Well, not quite – but conclusions are all that remain. This thesis set out to examine what early modern gardeners were doing in their gardens. Rarely, if ever, has the subject of garden history been approached from the view point of the gardener and this study aimed to look at gardening, as contemporary authors did, as an essentially practical activity in which a broad spectrum of society were engaged. Specifically, it sought to look beyond the well-researched extravagant showpieces of the nobility to the more ordinary gardens of the rural county gentry.

This apparently simple aim however had obvious problems. From the outset there was concern about the lack of evidence of such gardens – after all, this is the reason that so little is known about them, because the evidence on the ground simply isn’t there. Extant gardens from the period do not exist. In *The Renaissance Garden in England*, Sir Roy Strong dedicates his seminal work ‘In memory of all those gardens destroyed by Capability Brown and his successors’: I would concur wholeheartedly with this bluntly expressed sentiment.<sup>2</sup> However, on a more positive note, this clearly relieved me of the requirement to go tramping round muddy gardens in the wind and rain, and instead research could be concentrated on evidence to be gleaned from documentary archives although, due to the

---

<sup>1</sup> Robert Plot, *The Natural History of Staffordshire*, p. 227

<sup>2</sup> Having said this, and as Strong himself has pointed out, the new discipline of garden archaeology is now beginning to uncover more information about early gardens, but even so, this undoubtedly valuable research tells us little more of what the garden was really like beyond its structural layout. Strong, ‘The Renaissance Garden in England Reconsidered’, *GH*, 27:1 (1999), 2-9 (p. 3)



essentially practical and inherently ephemeral nature of gardening, it is not surprising to find that relatively little information about this activity was ever written down in the first place and much of what there is lies buried in archival material rarely examined for this kind of data. Nevertheless, diligent searching amongst disparate sources – and a few ‘lucky breaks’ – proved illuminating, shedding new and interesting light on the gardens and gardening activities of the gentry during this period.

Another difficulty encountered due to this paucity of evidence was the discovery that despite lack of concrete data in this area, a picture of Elizabethan and early Stuart gardens nevertheless seems firmly fixed in the modern mind, being perpetuated through numerous historical garden recreations and reconstructions which serve to give substance to traditional and sometimes fanciful notions which do not necessarily stand up to close scrutiny.

The aim therefore was to extend and challenge existing knowledge in order to gain a more insightful picture of the generality of gardens across England and the gardeners who were creating them, as well as to try and identify changes in practice over the period. Although evidence is disparate, the various sources when taken together made it possible for a fragmentary picture of early modern gardening to be pieced together.

The starting point for this investigation was the contemporary gardening literature beginning to be produced around this time, but which, it soon became apparent and as has been amply demonstrated, had to be approached very carefully in order to establish what it was really telling us about actual practice. Sixteenth-century books in particular were

shown to be based on classical and Renaissance works, reflecting the continental experience of their writers and being reproduced by ‘jobbing’ authors such as Thomas Hyll and Gervase Markham, who may or may not have had any practical knowledge of gardening in England. Similarly, other apparently authoritative works proved to be direct translations from French publications, again reflecting continental rather than English practice. However, the early seventeenth-century works of William Lawson and John Parkinson were identified as practical gardening books, written by gardeners for gardeners, based on real experience of local conditions and for the purposes of this study, proved invaluable as sources of information about contemporary practice. Whilst bearing in mind the inherent limitations of such material – that the advice is necessarily prescriptive rather than descriptive and at times reflected aspirations rather than reality – supplementing the evidence from these books with other contemporary sources enabled theory to be related to practice, thereby adding more facets to our somewhat sketchy picture.

Having said this, it now remains to be seen both how far we have come and how far there is still to go.

Firstly, it would seem that, as in many areas, this was a period of great change. Due to a whole host of factors which have been examined at length: social, cultural, political, geographical, to name just some, gardens and attitudes to gardens began to change. In the opening years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, gardens were essentially the same as they had been for centuries, enclosed spaces whose primary function, apart from those of the very wealthy, was a utilitarian one, to provide food for the household. They were set out ideally in a ‘four square form’, that is, in some kind of geometrical arrangement of regular

shaped beds, fenced with hedges, wooden pales or walls and contained herbs, fruit trees and vegetables. Where ornamental gardens were made, they were as likely to have been created from ‘dead’ materials such as coloured sands, gravel or clay as they were to be filled with flowers.<sup>3</sup> The lack of flowers may seem surprising, but a number of reasons for this can be surmised, the main one being that the range of flowering plants in England at this time was limited to native species such as roses, primroses, columbines and gilliflowers, all of which had a very short flowering season, generally in the summer.<sup>4</sup> So for most of the year, the garden would have been bereft of flowers: better then to decorate them with something more permanent, such as geometric paths and hedges, ornamented with structural features such as arbours and fountains. Additionally, flowers do not conform to the Tudor obsession with order and symmetry – they grow, spread, wither and die, refusing to be kept within their prescribed borders. Finally, and as alluded to above, although herbs and trees will have produced flowers, their main purpose was to produce food, medicines, flavourings and scent for the household. To grow flowers purely for their beauty was an indulgence that few could afford.

All this however, was to change. Whilst some things remained remarkably constant throughout the period, such as basic garden layouts, others did not. The new century brought adventurers back from across the seas with untold exotic delights for the garden. The number of plants and flowers available increased dramatically, bringing not just new varieties to be grown and admired, but also extending the possibilities of the ornamental garden. Spring flowering bulbs and later, an extended range of tender evergreen plants, revolutionised the way gardeners could plan their gardens, because now it was possible to

---

<sup>3</sup> See for instance, Markham, *The English Husbandman*, p. 125

<sup>4</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 11

have colour from plants in the garden all year round. Planting had to be carefully planned so as to allow each one to reach its full potential and be suitably displayed. As well as these practical considerations, new attitudes to luxury and pleasure engendered new ways of thinking, allowing gardeners in a position to do so to cultivate purely ornamental gardens. They became avid collectors, paying large sums for desirable plants and in the new spirit of conspicuous consumption this was viewed, not just as a personal pleasure, but as a new context in which to display wealth and status.

Central to this change stood John Parkinson, apothecary and gardener of London, who played a pivotal role in revolutionising both garden writing and gardening practices, advocating for the first time that ‘beautiful flower plants’ might be included in a garden for no other reason than their ornamental value, changing forever the way Englishmen viewed their gardens.

However, it has proved much less easy to document signs of a unified style in English gardens of the period. As much as we would like to talk about Elizabethan, Renaissance, Jacobean or Caroline gardens, contemporary gardeners were clearly oblivious to these retrospective labels and simply got on with creating what they wished. As William Lawson observed: ‘the form [of the garden] is so far necessary as the owner shall think meet’ and John Parkinson agreed that ‘every man will please his own fancie’.<sup>5</sup> This is amply borne out in the handful of gardens studied here which were subject to enormous variety due to a host of practical and aesthetic factors. Whilst the upper elite could afford, if they wished, to create spectacular gardens from scratch, influenced by Renaissance fashions coming across the channel from France and Italy (the examples of Wollaton Hall, Hatfield House and

---

<sup>5</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, p. 11[45]; Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 3

Wilton House all spring to mind), the fact is that most gentlemen were simply not in a position to do this. Not only, as we have seen in most cases, was their garden an added extra to their busy and no doubt expensive-to-run estates, their resources would not have extended to the whole-scale remodelling required to create such extravagances. Instead, they had to be content to incorporate various elements into their existing gardens as they saw fit and, certainly by the middle years of the seventeenth century, there was such a plethora of new ideas and influences arriving in England from Italy, France and Holland that it was possible for gardeners to pick and choose any elements from these styles that took their fancy. This is graphically illustrated by John Evelyn in particular, whose garden at Sayes Court reflected an eclectic mix of styles and tastes influenced by his previous twenty years travelling on the continent.

This example also illustrates another significant variable factor to be considered and that is the role of personal taste. As we have seen, Sir Thomas Temple included old-fashioned flowers in his small garden, because he liked them; Sir Thomas Hanmer and John Oglander bought expensive flowers for the same reason, although in the case of Oglander this may well have had something to do with his showing them off as well. Richard Leveson as far as we know wasn't interested in flowers, but instead filled his garden with structural features and ornament. Francis Bacon, as has been observed on a number of occasions, was very forthright in expressing his personal likes and dislikes.<sup>6</sup>

However, given such examples, and considering that we actually know anything at all about only a very few gardens of the time, the fact is that it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, for the garden historian to identify any distinctive style for this period. Our

---

<sup>6</sup> See *Of Gardens*, pp. 53, 54, 56 for example.

pursuit to find a 'typical' English garden of the period has perhaps proved fruitless and, as has been observed previously, it was to be the following century before a truly English style of gardening emerged, which was so widespread in its influence that it was to obliterate almost all evidence of everything that had gone before it.

But to turn now to the question posed at the outset: has this overview of gardens, gardeners and gardening in early modern England identified them as 'fit for any Gentleman'? I think the answer is an unequivocal yes. As we have seen, the contemporary writer John Parkinson, despite his attempt at an all inclusive approach, addresses his book primarily to gentlemen and gentlewomen 'of the better sort and quality', the 'better part of the Gentry of this land'.<sup>7</sup> In places, he appears to have in mind the landed gentry, such as Sir Thomas Wentworth or Sir John Oglander, who actually engaged in the practicalities of gardening such as grafting or planting trees themselves. But at the same time he is also addressing those who, in tune with the new aspirations of the age, were seeking to define themselves as gentlemen, but who needed advice on 'what to choose, or what to desire' in order to furnish their gardens in a manner 'answerable to the degree they hold'.<sup>8</sup> Gardens are established as a fit place in which to exhibit wealth and status, gardening (some aspects of it at least) as a pursuit worthy of the genteel. The careers of men such as Parkinson, Gerard and Tradescant bear witness to the elevated status accorded to gardeners and gardening through their skill, knowledge and reputation. John Evelyn further dignifies gardening, not just as an activity but also as an intellectual pursuit worthy of the learned gentleman. Its status has certainly moved on since Thomas Hyll produced his first gardening book in the previous century.

---

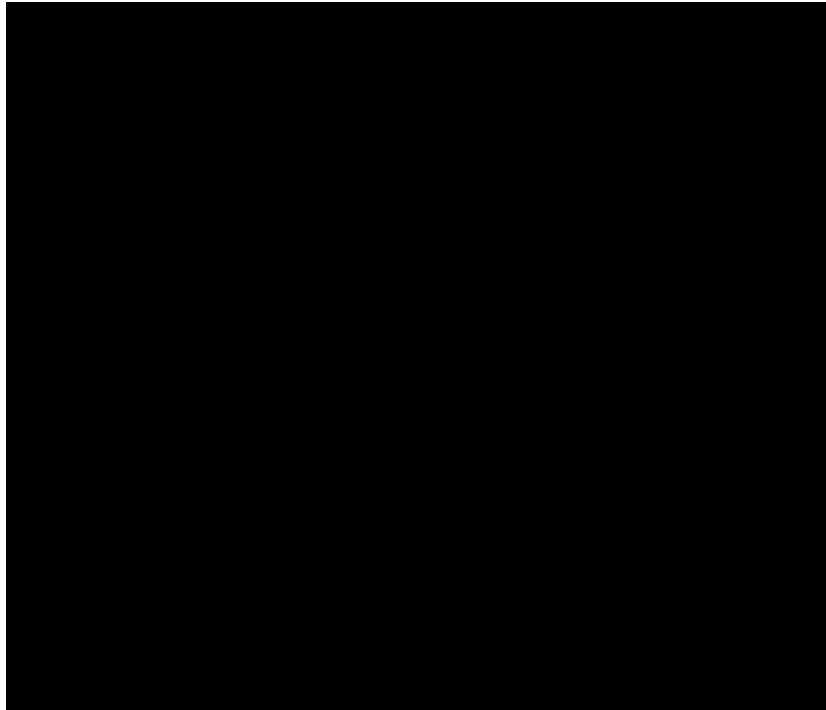
<sup>7</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, pp. 3, 538

<sup>8</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, p. 3

Finally, a word on where to go next. This thesis has only scratched the surface on the wealth of information to be uncovered in the 612 pages of John Parkinson's wonderful *Paradisi in Sole*: there is a great deal more work to be done here. Likewise, the manuscript archive of Sir Thomas Temple would repay further close attention and the knotty problem of knot gardens is still to be untangled. But most importantly, having set out in trepidation of ever finding anything out at all, the fact is that, with a little rummaging beneath the surface and 'digging among the garden beds', to borrow Harwood's phrase once more, a great deal of evidence has been unearthed about the activities of gardeners in early modern England, whether they are planting peas and beans, spreading muck in the kitchen garden, clipping bushes to dry the clothes on, taking vine cuttings, planting fruit trees or buying and swapping tulips with their gardening friends. Further meticulous searching in other gentry manuscript collections together with closer inspection of supporting evidence revealed in maps, surveys, plans and paintings can only add to this picture of gardeners, then as now, aspiring to create their own small 'place or garden called Paradise'.<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> Parkinson, *Paradisi*, Epistle to the Reader



**Figure 68** Gardeners spreading muck in the early modern garden  
from Thomas Hyll's *Gardeners Labyrinth*, 1577, p. 25





## APPENDIX 1.1 – BIBLIOGRAPHY OF GARDENING LITERATURE PUBLISHED IN ENGLISH, c.1558 – 1660<sup>1</sup>

Presented in chronological order

Author	Title	Date	Reprints	Printer/Publisher <sup>2</sup>	ESTC Citation No.	Notes
Hyll, Thomas d. 1575? <sup>3</sup>	<i>A most briefe and pleasaunte treatise, teachynge how to dresse, sowe, and set a garden</i>	1558?	1563	John Day  Thomas Marshe	S92995  S115202	
Hyll, Thomas d. 1575?	<i>The Proffitable Arte of Gardening, nowe the third tyme set fourth</i>	1568	1572 1574 1579 1586 1593 1608	Thomas Marshe  Thomas Marshe Henrie Bynneman Henry Bynneman Robert Walde-graue Edward Allde Edward Allde [and H. Ballard]	S104094  S104095 S117236 S104101 S120728 S104120 S104123	Revised and enlarged version of the above publication. Seven editions.      ‘third time set forth’ dropped from title ‘profitable’ dropped from title
Mascall, Leonard d. 1589	<i>A booke of the Arte and Maner how to plant and graffe all sortes of trees</i>	1572	1575  1582  1584	Henrie Denham, for John Wight [Henry Denham and John Charlewood?], for John Wight [John Kingston], for John Wight Henry Bynneman for John Wight	S112379  S112380 S112419 S1366	Eight editions.  Reprinted anonymously as the first part of the <i>The Country-mans Recreation</i> in 1640 and 1654 and reprinted as <i>The country-mans new art of planting and graffing</i> in 1651, 1652 and 1656. See note below.

<sup>1</sup> All details are verified by the English Short Title Catalogue <http://estc.bl.uk>

<sup>2</sup> All works published in London unless otherwise stated

<sup>3</sup> The date of Hyll’s death is unknown, but F. R. Johnson has surmised that it was ‘not later than 1575’: Johnson, ‘Thomas Hill: An Elizabethan Huxley’, *HLQ*, 7:4 (Aug 1944), 329-351, p.338

			1590 1592 1596 1599	T. Este, for Thomas Wight T. East, for Thomas Wight [Valentine Simmes] T. Este, for Thomas Wight	S101426 S103380 S112422 S2810	
<b>Scot, Reynolde</b> d. 1599	<i>A perfite platform of a hoppe garden</i>	<b>1574</b>	1576 1578	Henrie Denham Henrie Denham Henrie Denham	S103209 S116892 S116896	Three editions. Reprinted anonymously as the second part of the <i>The Country-man's Recreation</i> in 1640 and 1654. See note below.
<b>Hyll, Thomas</b> d. 1575?	<i>The Gardeners Labyrinth</i>	<b>1577</b>	1578 1586 1594 1608 1651 1652 1656 1660	Henry Bynneman Henry Bynneman John Wolfe Adam Islip Henry Ballard Jane Bell Jane Bell Jane Bell H[enry] Bell for Edward Brewster	S118782 S113279 S104113 S104115 S104118 R178161 R202411 R178162 R178163	Published after Hyll's death under the thinly disguised pseudonym of 'Dydymus Mountaine'. Nine editions.
<b>Anon</b>	<i>A Short Instruction verie profitable and necessarie for all those that delight in gardening</i>	<b>1592</b>		John Wolfe	S2148	This book continued to be printed, but always bound together with <i>The Orchard, and the Garden</i> . See next entry.
<b>Anon</b>	<i>The Orchard, and the Garden</i>	<b>1594</b>	1596 1597 1602	Adam Islip Adam Islip Adam Islip Adam Islip	S121003 S94531 S94532 S105739	Four editions (incorporating <i>A Short Instruction verie profitable and necessarie for all those that delight in gardening</i> . See note above.) Reprinted as <i>The Expert Gardener</i> in 1640, and incorporated as the third part of <i>The Country-mans Recreation</i> in 1640 and 1654.

<b>Gardiner, Richard</b>	<i>Profitable instructions for the manuring, sowing, and planting of kitchen gardens</i>	<b>1599</b>	1603	Edward Alde for Edward White Edward Alde for Edward White	S105694 S114902	Two editions.
<b>Surflet, Richard</b> d. 1606 <sup>4</sup>	<i>Maison Rustique, or The Countrey Farm</i>	<b>1600</b>	1606	Edm. Bollifant for Bonham Norton Arnold Hatfield for John Norton and John Bill	S101733	English translation of Charles Estienne's <i>L'Agriculture et Maison Rustique</i> , reprinted numerous times in French between 1564 and 1689.
<b>Plat, Hugh</b> d. 1611?	<i>Floraes Paradise</i>	<b>1608</b>		H. L[ownes] for William Leake	S20798	Reprinted many years after Plat's death as <i>The Garden of Eden</i> . See note below. This book comprises a compilation of material ('secrets') gathered from many sources.
<b>Markham, Gervase</b> d. 1637	<i>The English Husbandman: The First Part</i>	<b>1613</b>		T[homas] S[nodham] for John Browne	S112063	The second part of the First Book concerns the Art of Planting, grafting and gardening
<b>Markham, Gervase</b> d. 1637	<i>The Second Book of the English Husbandman</i>	<b>1614</b>	1615	T[homas] S[nodham] for John Browne T[homas] S[nodham] for John Browne	S112058 S112067	The Second Book concerns the ordering of the kitchen garden. The First and Second books were published together in 1635 as <i>The English Husbandman</i> . See note below.
<b>Markham, Gervase</b> d. 1637	<i>Maison Rustique, or The Countrey Farme</i>	<b>1616</b>		Adam Islip for John Bill	S121357	A 'newly reviewed' edition of Richard Surflet's translation of Estienne's <i>Maison Rustique</i>
<b>Lawson, William</b> d. 1635 <sup>5</sup>	<i>A New Orchard and Garden [...] with the Country-Houswives Garden</i>	<b>1618</b>	1623 1626 1631	Bar: Alsop for Roger Jackson I. H[aviland and G. Purslowe] for Roger Jackson I. H[aviland] for Francis Williams Nicolas Okes for John Harison	S106785 S108372 S108391 S4739	Thirteen editions, three printed after 1660 in 1665, 1676 and 1683.

<sup>4</sup> [www.british-history.ac.uk](http://www.british-history.ac.uk) [accessed 19 June 2011]

<sup>5</sup> John Harvey, 'William Lawson and his Orchard, *Country Life*, Oct. 28, 1982, 1338-40 (p. 1340)

			1638 1648 1653  1656 1656 1660	Edward [and Anne] Griffin for John Harrison W. Wilson for John Harison W. Wilson for E. Brewster, and George Sawbridge W. Wilson for E. Brewster, [ditto] W. Wilson for E. Brewster, [ditto] W. Wilson for E. Brewster, [ditto]	S93434  R25449 R23999  R43360  R43361  R41543	Lawson's book was also incorporated in full in sixteen editions of Markham's <i>A Way to get Wealth</i> , published between 1623 and 1695.
<b>Anon</b>	<i>Certaine excellent and new invented knots and mazes</i>	<b>1623</b>		John Marriott	S108103	Illustrations of knots compiled from various sources. No text. Has been attributed to Gervase Markham but the printers note signed 'I. M.' would point to Marriott as the more likely compiler of this book.
<b>Parkinson, John</b> d. 1650	<i>Paradisi in Sole Paradisus Terrestris</i>	<b>1629</b>	1635 1656 1656	Humphrey Lownes and Robert Young Tho. Cotes R. N. R. N.	S115360  S94613 R29251 R491318	Four editions. All identical apart from a new title page in the 1656 edition.
<b>Markham,</b> Gervase d. 1637	<i>The English Husbandman</i>	<b>1635</b>	1635	[Augustine Mathewes and John Norton] for Henry Taunton [Augustine Mathewes and John Norton] for William Sheares	S112073  S112064	
<b>Anon</b>	<i>The Expert Gardener</i>	<b>1640</b>		Richard Herne	S108876	Reprint of the anonymous <i>Orchard, and the Garden</i>

<b>Anon</b>	<i>The Countryman's Recreation</i>	<b>1640</b>		B. Alsop and T. Fawcet for Michael Young	S1108874	Anonymous reprint of Mascall's <i>Arte and Maner</i> , Scot's <i>Perfite Platforme of a Hoppe garden</i> and <i>The Expert Gardener</i> . See notes above.
<b>Plat</b> , Hugh d.1611?	<i>The Garden of Eden</i>	<b>1653</b>		William Leake	R181830	Revised and reprinted edition of <i>Floraes Paradise</i> (1608). 6 further reprints and 2 revisions between 1653 and 1675.
<b>Barker</b> , Thomas fl. 1651	<i>The Countryman's Recreation</i>	<b>1654</b>		T. Mabb [and William Hunt] for William Shears	R207486	Barker seems to have appropriated the anonymous 1640 edition and added his own <i>The Arte of Angling</i>
<b>Bonnefons</b> , Nicolas	<i>The French Gardiner</i>	<b>1658</b>	1658 1658	J[ames] C[otterell] for John Crooke J. C. for John Crooke for John Crooke	R170703 R28517 R209902	Seven editions, four printed after 1660 in 1669, 1672, 1675 and 1691. Translated into English by <b>John Evelyn</b>
<b>Hanmer</b> , Thomas d. 1678	<i>'The Garden Book'</i>	<b>1659</b>		Unpublished manuscript		Hanmer never gave his book a title, it only became known as <i>The Garden Book</i> when the manuscript was finally published in 1933.
<b>Evelyn</b> , John d. 1706	<i>Elysium Britannicum</i>	<b>c.1659</b>		Unpublished manuscript		This manuscript eventually published in 2001, edited by John Ingram.

## APPENDIX 1.2 – BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SIGNIFICANT RELATED CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE, c.1558 – 1660

Author	Title	Date	Printer/Publisher		Notes
Fitzherbert, John	<i>The Boke of Husbandry</i>	1534	London: Thomas Berthelet	S4300	First published in 1523 as <i>A newe tracte or treatyse moost profytable for all Husbandemen</i> . First book on husbandry in English.
Estienne, Charles	<i>L'agriculture et Maison Rustique</i>	1564 <sup>6</sup>	Paris: J. Du Puis	FRBNF 30407827 <sup>7</sup>	Revised and republished many times by his son-in-law Jean Liebault. Translated into English by Richard Surfleet in 1600. See note above.
Tusser, Thomas	<i>One hundreth good points of husbandry</i>	1557	Richard Totell, four editions	S101790	Husbandry – contains short section on gardening, directed at the housewife
Tusser, Thomas	<i>Five hundred good points of husbandry</i>	1573	Richard Totell, twenty editions before 1660	S118708	
Googe, Barnaby	<i>Foure Bookes of Husbandrie</i>	1577	Richard Watkins, seven editions	S103974	Husbandry – contains short section on gardening, directed at the housewife
Lyte, Henry	<i>A New Herbal of History of Plants</i>	1578	Antwerp: Henry Loë, five editions	S126799	Herbal
Gerard, John	<i>The Herball, or Generall Historie of Plants</i>	1597	Edm. Bollifont for [Bonham Norton and] John Norton	S122353	Herbal. Revised and reprinted by Thomas Johnson in 1633 and 1636.
Markham, Gervase	<i>The English Huswife</i>	1615	J[ohn] B[eale] for R. Jackson	S112047	Contains short section on gardening. First published as book 2 of <i>Countrie Contentments</i> , then reprinted in various other publications, esp. <i>The Way to Get Wealth</i>
Markham, Gervase	<i>The Way to Get Wealth</i>	1623	Roger Jackson, sixteen editions	S94121	Incorporating Lawson's <i>A New Orchard and Garden</i>

<sup>6</sup> First edition held at the Bibliotheque Nationale de France <http://catalogue.bnf.fr> [accessed 26 June 2011]

<sup>7</sup> Bibliotheque Nationale catalogue reference number

Wotton, Henry	<i>Elements of Architecture</i>	1624	John Bill	S120324	Includes a chapter on gardens
Bacon, Francis	'Of Gardens' from <i>The Essayes or Counsels, civill and morall, of Francis Lo. Verulam, Viscount St. Alban</i>	1625	John Haviland for Hanna Barret and Richard Whitaker	S124226	Essay on gardens. Forty-sixth essay in the collection.
Parkinson, John	<i>Theatrum Botanicum: The Theater of Plants</i>	1640	London: T. Cotes	S121875	Herbal
Austen, Ralph	<i>Treatise on Fruit Trees</i>	1653	Oxford: Leonard Lichfield for Tho: Robinson, two editions	R12161	Agricultural 'improvement' literature
Hartlib, Samuel	<i>His Legacie: A Discourse of Husbandry</i>	1651	H. Hills for Richard Woodnothe	R202377	Collection of letters to Hartlib. Two further editions enlarged and reprinted in 1652 and 1655.
Mollet, André	<i>Le Jardin de Plaisir</i>	1651 1670	Stockholm: H. Kayser London: Thomas Newcomb for John Martyn	---- R7156	In French. Translated into English by Mollet and published as <i>The Garden of Pleasure</i>
Coles, William	<i>The Art of Simpling</i>	1656	J. G. for Nath: Brooke, two editions	R209440	Herbal
Coles, William	<i>Adam in Eden</i>	1657	J. Steater for Nathaniel Brooke	R8275	Herbal
Beale, John	<i>Herefordshire Orchards: A Pattern for all England</i>	1657	Roger Daniel	R4687	Agricultural 'improvement' literature





## **APPENDIX 2**

### **THE TEMPLE FAMILY PAPERS: A TRANSCRIPT OF SELECTED CORRESPONDENCE**

This Appendix contains transcripts of a selection of 18 letters written by Sir Thomas Temple, Knight and Baronet of Stowe, mostly dated in 1631/32. These are contained within the substantial Temple Collection held at the Huntington Library in California and are of particular interest here because they relate specifically to Sir Thomas' garden at Burton Dassett. Three of the letters are addressed to his son, Sir Peter Temple who by this time had taken over the running of the family seat at Stowe in Buckinghamshire and the rest are addressed to his 'Baylie' [Bailiff, or estate manager] Harry Rose, who manages the house and estate at Burton Dassett in Sir Thomas' absence. These include a copy of a letter sent to Richard 'the Gardiner' giving detailed instructions on work to be carried out in the garden at Burton Dassett. From the correspondence it is possible to surmise that after he moved away from Stowe in 1624, Sir Thomas spent more and more of his time, particularly during the summer months, at his childhood home at Dassett, and in his declining years, devoted attention to creating a small parlour garden there. Details of this garden and how it was to be created and maintained are set out in the letters transcribed below.

**Notes:**

Transcription conventions are set out at the beginning of this thesis.

Marginal notes added by Sir Thomas in the original letters are added here in *italics*.

The letters to Harry Rose and Richard the gardener are presented in chronological order, the letters to Sir Peter Temple appear at the end.

The STT numbers refer to the Huntington Library catalogue references.

It has very recently come to my attention that the complex relationships within the Temple Family alluded to in some of these letters are currently being researched by Rosemary O'Day at the Open University.



### APPENDIX 3

#### THE EVIDENCE FOR KNOT GARDENS IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND: A REAPPRAISAL

Despite the fact that an image of the knot garden seems to be firmly fixed in the modern mind as the defining element of an Elizabethan garden, being confidently reproduced in historic gardens such as those at Hatfield House, Kenilworth Castle or Shakespeare's garden at New Place in Stratford upon Avon, the fact is that we actually know very little about them at all. That knot gardens were being laid out in English gardens throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is not in question: contemporary sources contain many references to the clipping of knots, the cutting of turfs and the filling of knots for instance with 'all sorts of French flowers and tulips'.<sup>1</sup> What is in question however is what these gardens actually might have looked like, because evidence for this is virtually non-existent.

Garden historians reluctantly agree. In 1924, Frank Crisp, author of the first definitive book on medieval gardens, compiled and published after his death in 1924, stated that 'there can be no doubt that knots of the Middle Ages were practically identical with those so frequently described after that date', but then admits that 'Knots are neither described nor illustrated prior to 1571'.<sup>2</sup> In 1979, Sir Roy Strong, in his seminal work *The Renaissance Garden in England*, confidently claimed that 'The central feature of all gardens of pleasure in the sixteenth century was the knot', but in his later publication, *The Artist and the Garden*, acknowledges that thus far the history of the knot garden has been 'wrapped in total obscurity'.<sup>3</sup> C. Paul Christianson has recently noted that the actual design

---

<sup>1</sup> See HL, Temple MSS, ST452; BL, Add. 33147, fol. 122; IOWRO, OG/AA/29, fol. 2

<sup>2</sup> Crisp, *Mediaeval Gardens*, p. 60

<sup>3</sup> Strong, *The Renaissance Garden in England*, p. 40; *The Artist and the Garden*, p. 13

of early garden knots has been a matter of recurring speculation among garden historians as no unmistakable images of early knot plantings survive.<sup>4</sup>

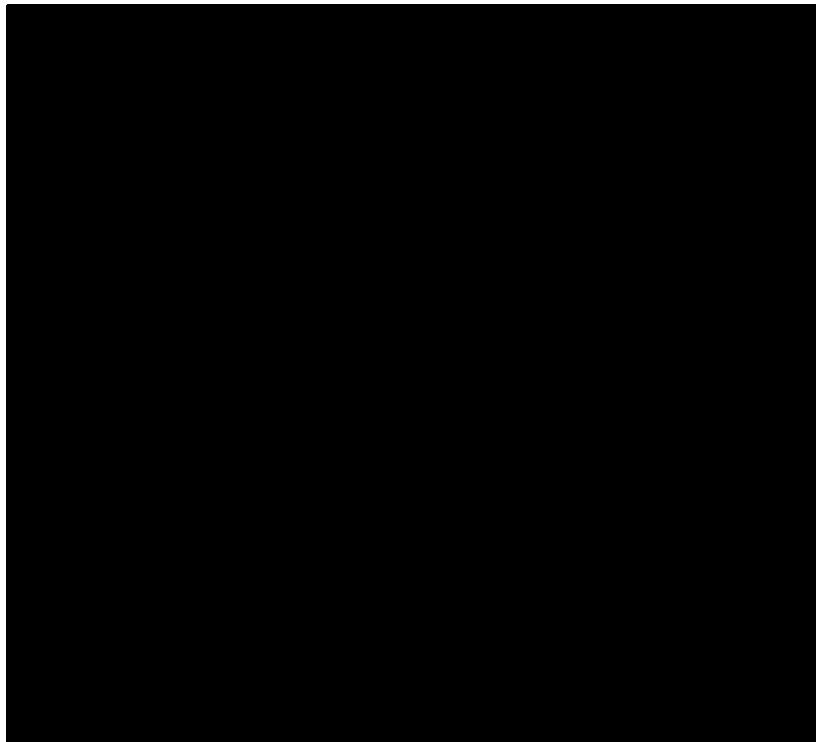
Despite this lack of evidence however, there does seem to be a consensus that by the late Elizabethan era, the interlacing knot was a definitive feature in English gardens. Roy Strong, who sets out to trace the history of the knot garden using a previously untapped source of evidence – an examination of the gardens that appear in the background of contemporary portraits – starts his investigation from the assumption that ‘knots in the form of complex interlacing patterns did not appear before the 1580s’, clearly implying that after this time they did become a feature of later Elizabethan gardens.<sup>5</sup> Whalley and Jenkins in their 1998 study of knots and parterres similarly date this kind of design to the later part of the sixteenth century and David Jacques, in what is perhaps the most considered discussion on the current state of thinking on knot gardens to date observes that, contrary to the assumptions of some authors, the fashion in England for knots of the interlacing type seems to have started no earlier than the 1580s, issuing a tentative warning that ‘Perhaps the modern age should be cautious in assuming that early Tudor knots must have been of interlacing design’, but again implying that knot gardens later in the century were of this type.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Christianson, *The Riverside Gardens of Thomas More's London*, p. 169

<sup>5</sup> Strong, *The Artist and the Garden*, p. 31

<sup>6</sup> Whalley and Jennings, *Knot Gardens and Parterres*, p. 49; Jacques, ‘The *Compartment* System in Tudor England’, p. 42



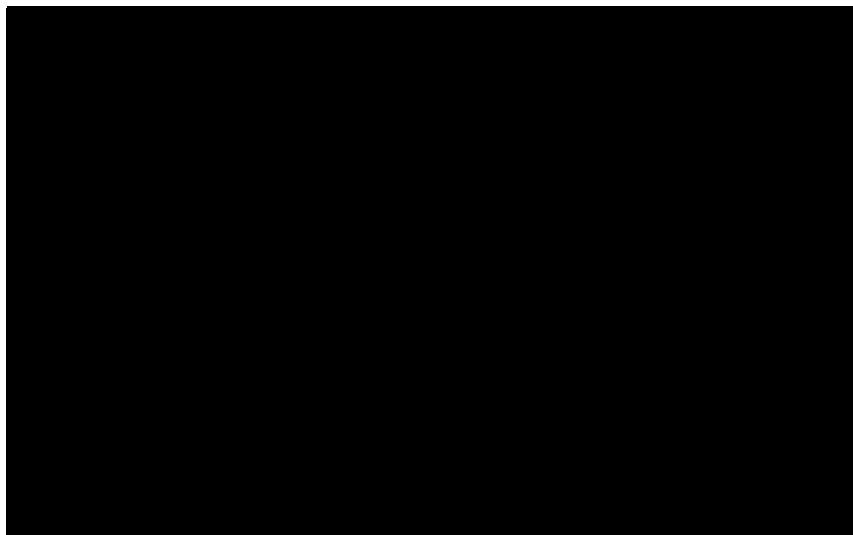
**Figure 69 Illustration of the type of interlacing knot  
under discussion here, representative of designs to be  
found in many contemporary sources**  
from Thomas Hyll, *The Gardeners' Labyrinth*, 1578

However, there are problems with this conclusion: evidence, such as it is, is open to a variety of interpretations and is often found wanting. As in so many areas of garden history, this is a difficulty that manifests itself in the increasing number of recreations and restorations of historic gardens, because the fact remains that despite this lack of evidence, an image of what we think these gardens looked like persists. Theoretical studies and practical recreations apparently start from the premise that we do know what these gardens looked like, even though we have yet to find the proof.

It is therefore proposed here to re-examine some of the evidence in order to try and establish, not what we would like it to tell us, but what, if anything, it is really telling us. Discussion will be limited to the consideration of two main questions: when, if ever, were

interlacing knot gardens fashionable in England? And, given the paucity of evidence, from where do we think we are getting our picture of what these gardens looked like?

An initial problem arises in defining what exactly was meant by a ‘knot’, because although references to knots appear throughout the period, the term does not seem to apply to anything very specific and in the absence of visual images or descriptions, there are few clues as to what was actually being referred to. As was discussed in Chapter 2, David Jacques has argued that early knots may well have been nothing more than a simple arrangement of beds within borders, as illustrated for instance in this extant sketch of the garden at Richmond Palace by Anthony Wyngaerde, c. 1550, or in the ubiquitous image of an Elizabethan garden from Thomas Hyll’s *The Gardeners’ Labyrinth* of 1577.<sup>7</sup>



**Figure 70** Anthonis van de Wyngaerde, *View of the Privy Garden at Richmond Palace*, c. 1550<sup>8</sup>  
from Strong, p. 28

---

<sup>7</sup> Jacques, ‘The *Compartment* system’, p. 43

<sup>8</sup> All images in this Appendix are from Strong, *The Artist in the Garden*, unless otherwise stated. Some have already appeared in the main text, but are reproduced again here for convenience.



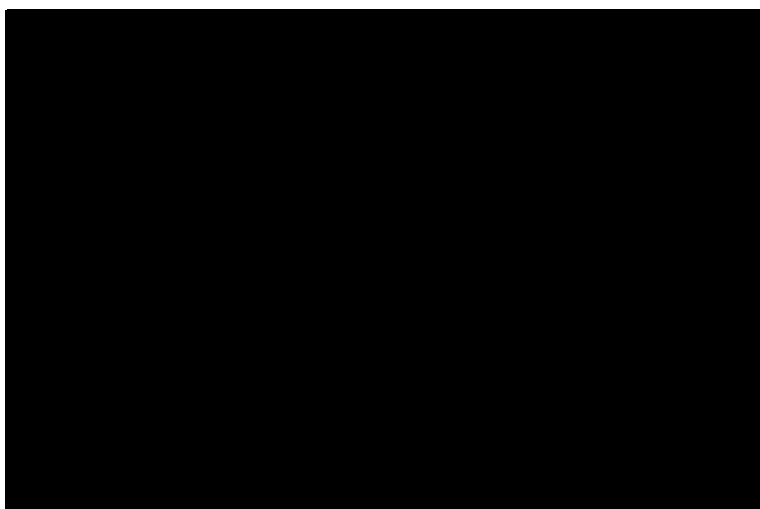


Figure 71 Thomas Hyll, *The maner of* [redacted] *with a Pumpe in a tubbe*  
from *The Gardeners Labyrinth*, 1577

Strong also agrees that, in addition to the complex interlacing knot, any arrangement within a compartment of beds throughout the period could also be referred to as a knot.<sup>9</sup> Problems with terminology continue into the seventeenth century. Contemporary garden writers such as Gervase Markham appear to use the words ‘knot’ and ‘quarter’ interchangeably and later in the century, the French garden designer André Mollet in his 1670 translation of his publication *Le Jardin de Plaisir* illustrates in detail extremely intricate designs for knot gardens (to be discussed, see p. 408 below), which he describes variously and interchangeably as knots, parterres and compartments throughout the work. His English contemporary, John Evelyn, similarly conflates the terms knot, parterre and compartment.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Strong, *The Artist and the Garden*, p. 31

<sup>10</sup> Gervase Markham, *The English Husbandman* (London, 1613), see for instance p. 112; André Mollet, *Le Jardin de Plaisir, or The Garden of Pleasure* (Sweden, 1653; trans. London, 1670), see for instance p. 4; John Evelyn, *Elysium Britannicum*, p. 123

In addition to these difficulties, if we also bear in mind that many English gardening books were originally derived from French sources, there also arises the possibility of confusions resulting from translation. For instance, in the text of *Maison Rustique*, the French word *compartiment* is translated into English as ‘proportion’ or occasionally ‘quarter’. For example, in the rubric accompanying the illustrations for knot designs, *Compartiment Simple* is translated as ‘A simple proportion, or draught of a knot’ or for a more complex design, *Bordure avec son compartiment due milieu* translates as ‘A border with his severall proportion in the midst’. There seems to be no direct translation from French into ‘knot’.<sup>11</sup> Further room for confusion arises when we remember that in English the word ‘knot’ refers to both the garden design and the process of tying the lines in order to make them: ‘Upon this line you shall make knots [...] and then another knot for the second or inward circle of the round [...] to every knot of the said line for to make your rounds withall, you shall make fast, right over against the knot [...] by the means of these knots shorter or longer....’[!]<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately, none of this helps in our quest to clarify what was actually meant by the word ‘knot’, except that it was apparently an extremely wide-ranging term used to describe any kind of design set in a geometrical border within the garden.

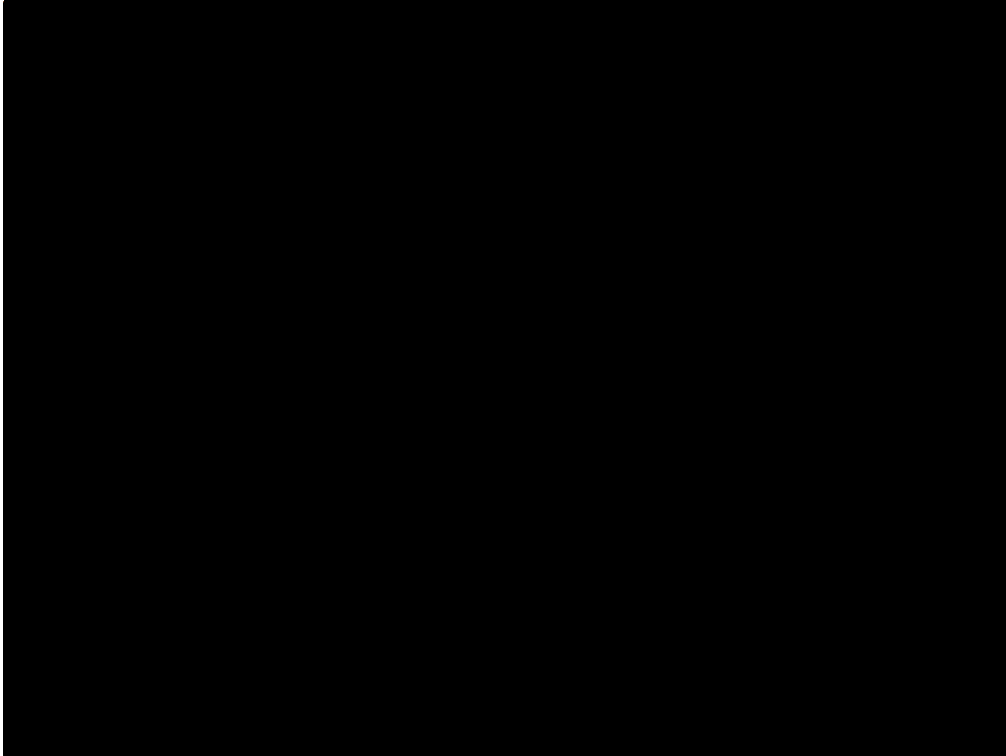
In an attempt therefore to unravel some of the complexities surrounding the knot garden, the following discussion will begin by providing a reassessment of the evidence depicted in the contemporary portraits collated and examined by Strong, which, despite debatable interpretation, nevertheless still provide a rare source of visual evidence of gardens from this period.

---

<sup>11</sup> Comparison between Charles Estienne, *L'agriculture et Maison Rustique* (Paris, 1598) and Richard Surfleet, *Maison Rustique, or The Countrie Farme* (London, 1600), pp. 331-342

<sup>12</sup> Surfleet, *The Countrie Farme*, p. 327

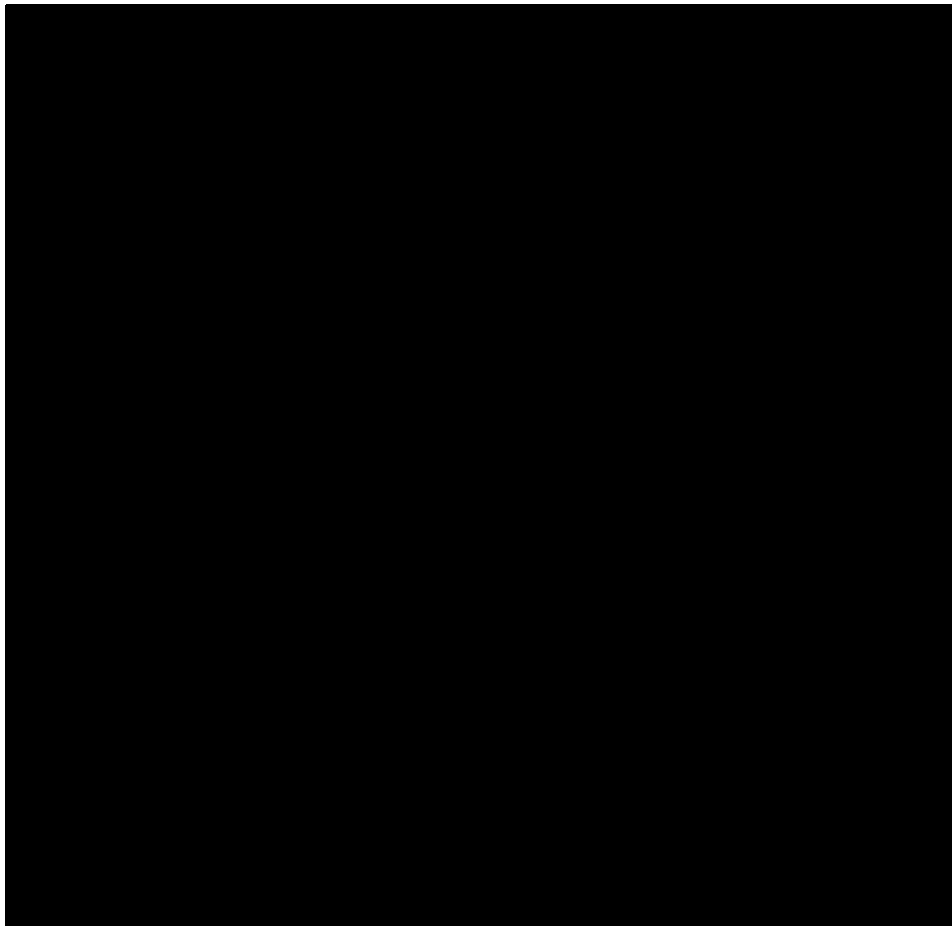
One of the earliest portraits to depict an English garden in the background is Rowland Lockey's *Thomas More and Family*, dated around 1593-4.



**Figure 72** Rowland Lockey, after Holbein, *Thomas More and Family*, 1593-4  
from Strong, p. 30

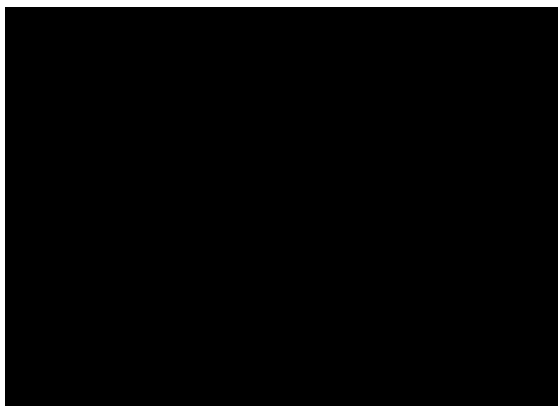
It is an updated version after Holbein's original from the 1520s, which depicted the seven figures shown here on the left of the painting : Sir Thomas More, his father, his son, his three daughters and his daughter-in-law. In this updated version, a new generation, More's grandson, his wife and their two sons, are now added to the family group. (Obviously, as the two family groups were not contemporaneous, there is no sense of this being a depiction of reality.) Strong dates the garden in this painting unequivocally to between 1520 when More bought the land for his new house in Chelsea, and his execution in 1535.

However, the garden in the background of this later painting does not appear in the original portrait, which does leave this dating open to question. Whilst it is always possible that this image does represent a garden as it was in the 1520s, Lockey's positioning of the garden within his new composition, framing and giving prominence as it does to the new family group, clearly associates the garden with the later generation. Also, by this time the More family no longer lived at Sir Thomas' Chelsea residence, so there is no sense in which this can be a 'real' view and it is extremely unlikely that Lockey would have had any idea what the garden had looked like over half a century earlier. It surely seems more probable that the artist has depicted a garden which was contemporaneous with Sir Thomas' descendants and one which would be familiar to him: that is, a garden of the late Elizabethan era.

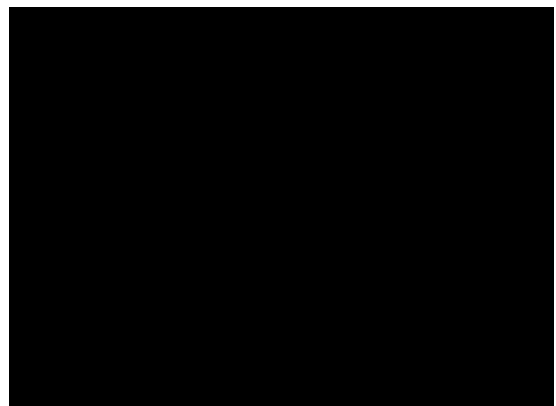


**Figure 73 Lockey, *Thomas More and Family*.**  
Detail from Figure 72 above

However, if this is the case, as we can see, this is a very simple garden layout, comprising one hedged compartment, set within a larger area, with walls on at least two sides. The compartment contains five squares, or quarters and an L-shaped border, each edged with low hedging and surrounded by wide paths. The relative size of the garden can be ascertained by the depiction of the two figures walking side by side along the outer path. There are three trees and although they are not planted symmetrically, the overall impression is of a geometric and ordered pattern within the garden. There is, however, absolutely no sign of anything more intricate: it would seem that this is an example of exactly the kind of garden described by Jacques – a simple arrangement of bordered squares, which may well have been referred to as knots. The More family portrait is unarguably a valuable source of visual evidence depicting an early modern garden, but what it appears to be showing us is a garden of the late Elizabethan period, not a garden of the 1520s. The arrangement is not so very different from the one shown in the sketch of Richmond Palace referred to above and is similar to those depicted for instance in this map of London from around 1558, or in this painting of Conway Castle from around 1600, indicating the prevalence of these simple knot designs up to the end of the century.

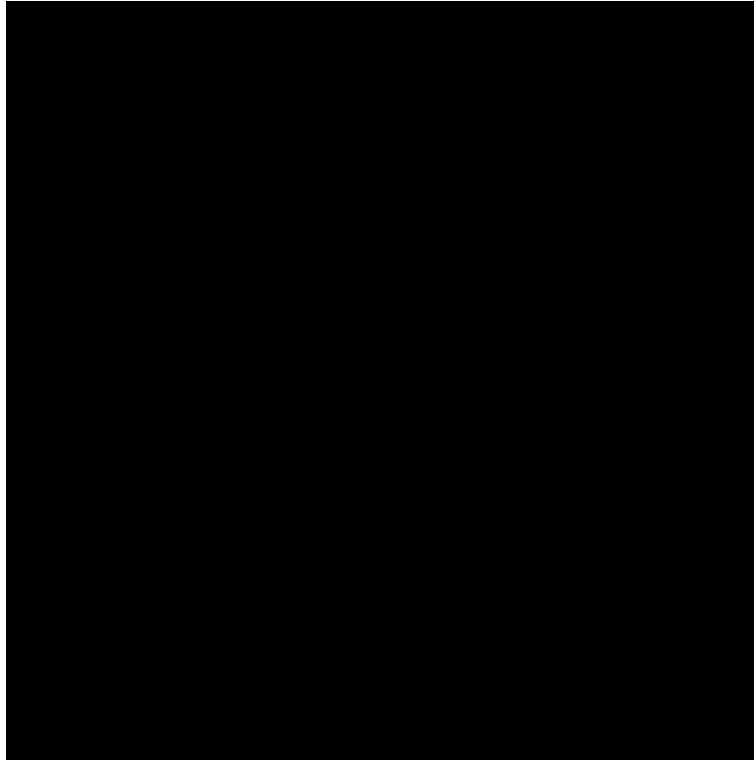


**Figure 74 Detail from the 'Agas' Map of London, c. 1561**  
City of London, Guildhall Library



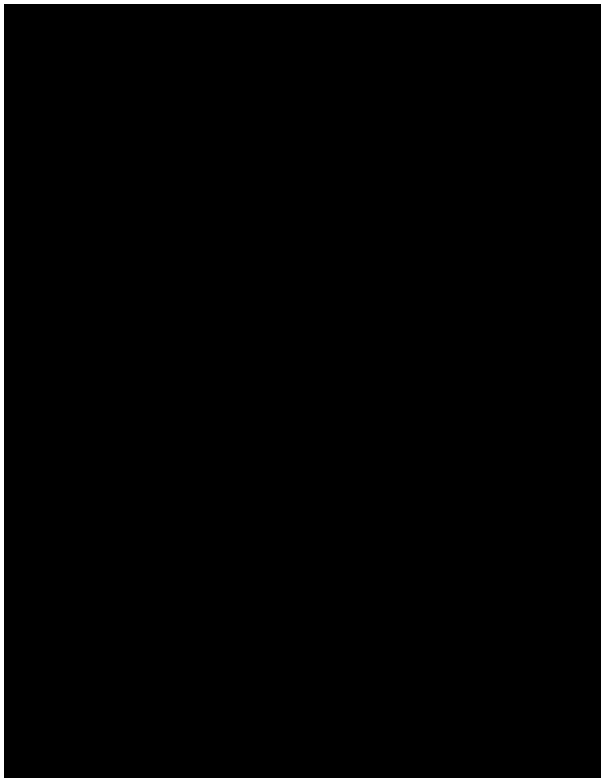
**Figure 75 Detail of Conway Castle, c. 1600**  
from Elizabeth Whittle, *The Historic Gardens of Wales*

As we move into the seventeenth century, a series of portraits continue to depict this kind of arrangement in gardens. For instance, this detail from a portrait of *Sir Thomas Lucy and his family*, c. 1620 shows, somewhat obscurely in the background, a formal garden at Charlecote Park, set out in geometric hedged compartments.

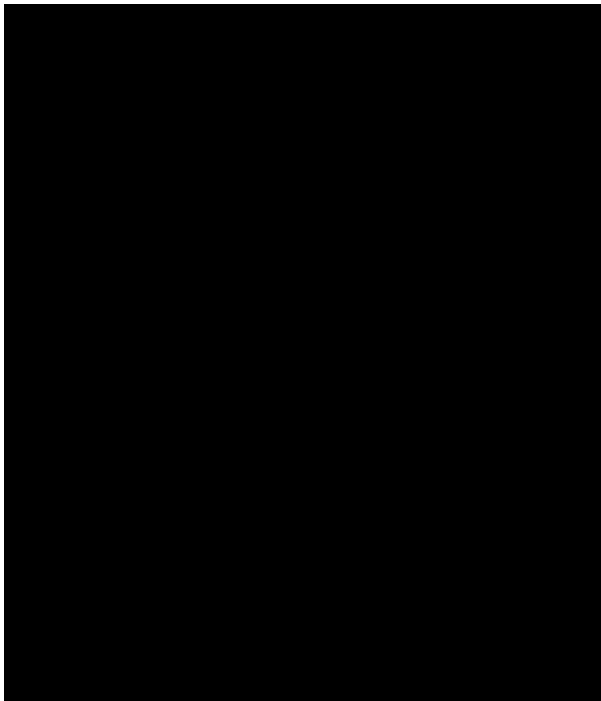


**Figure 76** Detail from  
*Sir Thomas Lucy III and his Family*, c. 1620  
from Strong, p. 39

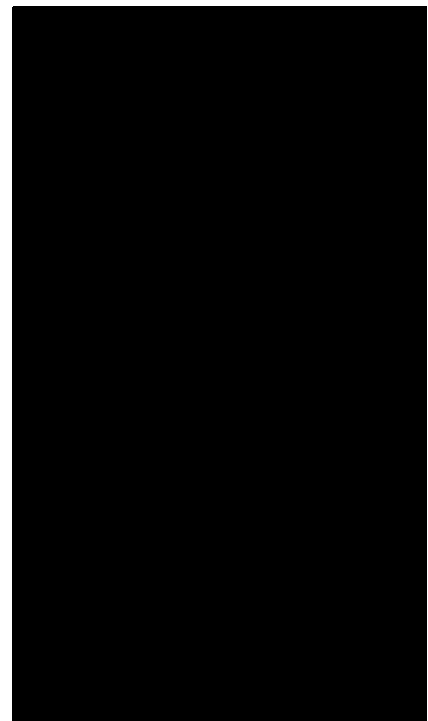
Similar arrangements can be discerned in this portrait of Queen Anne of Denmark from around 1611-14, the portrait of an unknown gentleman from 1620 and of a *Lady of the Hampden Family*, c. 1610-15.



**Figure 77** Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger,  
**Anne of Denmark, c. 1611-14**  
from Strong, p. 36

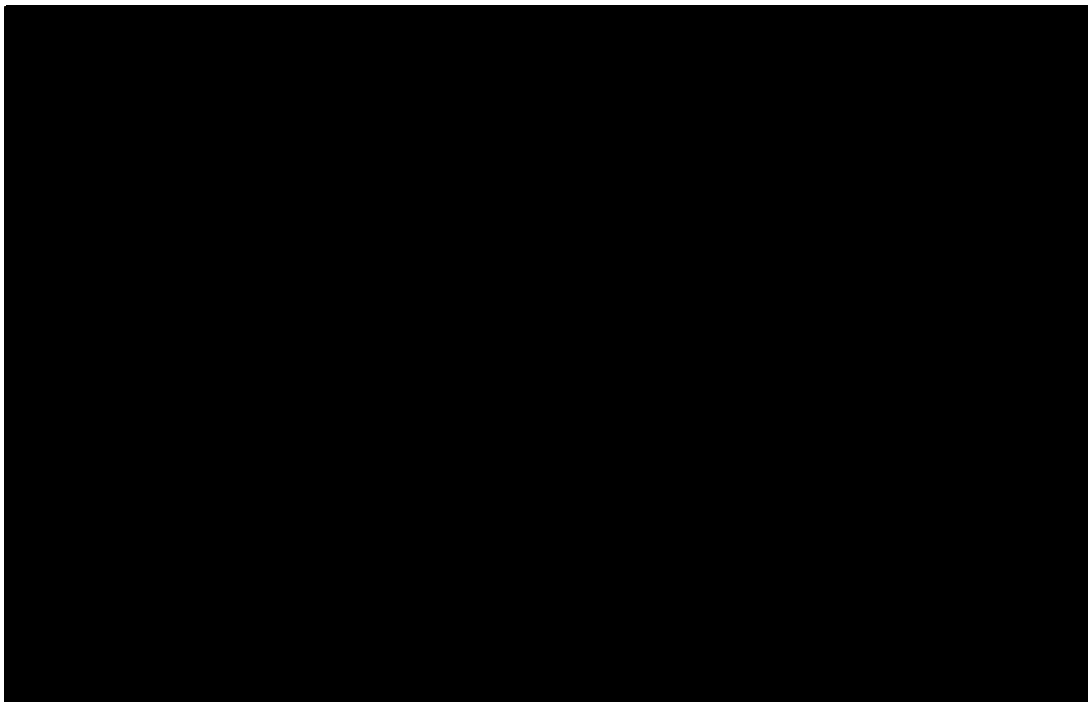


**Figure 78** Artist Unknown, *unknown*  
*gentleman, Called Henry, Prince of Wales,*  
**c. 1620**  
from Strong, p. 40



**Figure 79** Robert Peake, *Lady of the*  
*Hampden Family, c. 1610-15*  
from Strong, p. 105

These later gardens are clearly more formal and sophisticated in their execution, but they seem little different in essence to the Elizabethan gardens already discussed. Other portraits all dating from between 1611-1615, show variations on the arrangement of geometric patterns within the garden, although some also reveal early signs of the emergence of a more open, cut-turf style of knot design that became fashionable later in the century and which is so clearly seen in the magnificent garden depicted in this portrait of Lord Capel of Hadenham and his family from around 1641.



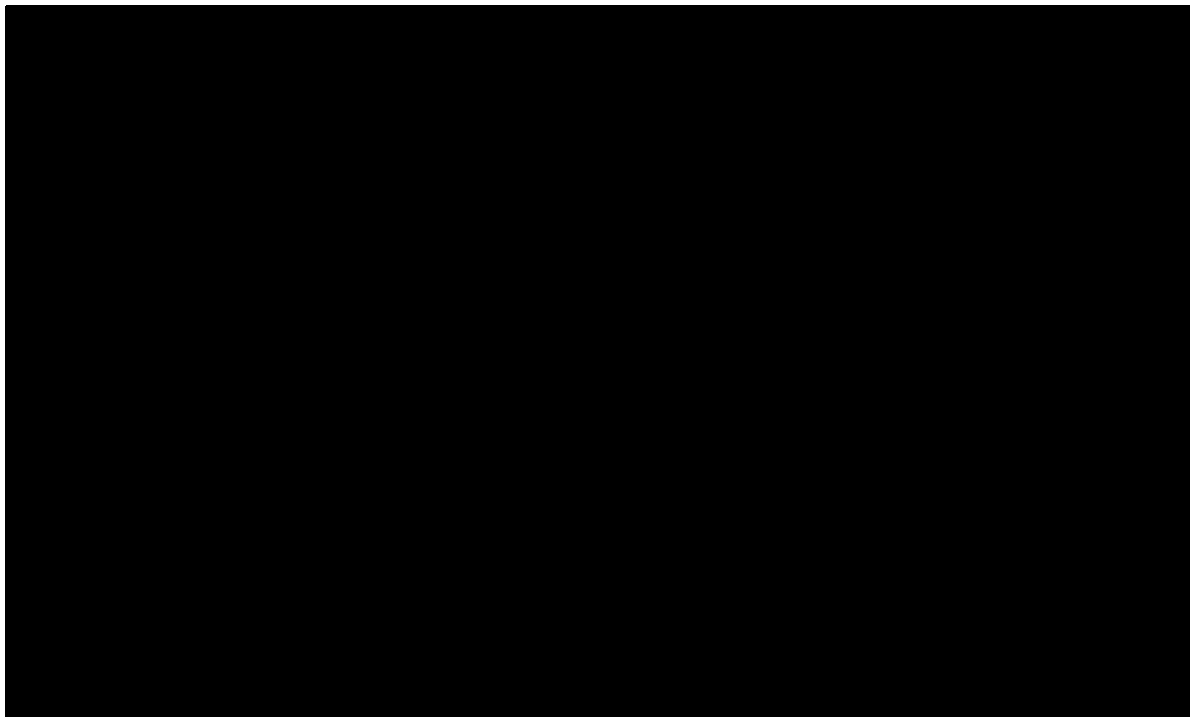
**Figure 80** Cornelius Johnson,  
*Arthur, 1st Baron Capel and his family, c. 1641*  
from Strong, p. 53

Paintings such as this alert us to some of the obvious limitations of using such portraits as sources of evidence, as they clearly only represent the tiny proportion of the population who would have been in a position to commission them – such evidence tells us nothing



about what was going on the generality of gardens. Additionally, even among these, there are actually very few contemporary portraits that depict gardens at all in the background. The above overview is not exhaustive, but even Strong's comprehensive examination of what appears to be all the relevant material amounts to no more than a dozen or so paintings from the period.

More fundamentally however, using paintings as evidence of actual practice is inherently problematic in itself, because in the absence of corroborating data, it is impossible to know whether or not the images bear any resemblance to reality, as this was not necessarily their purpose. As was discussed in Chapter 3, family portraits of this period played a crucial role in the assertion of status and, as such, included details which reflected the wealth and preoccupations of the family. The portrait of the Lucy Family at Charlecote Park referred to above is an excellent case in point.



**Figure 81** Artist Unknown, *Sir Thomas Lucy III and his family*, c. 1620  
from Strong, p. 38

The family is arranged in an richly decorated room, with the patterned carpet, the falcon, the books on the table and so on, all prominently displayed. The importance of the garden is emphasised by the prominent position within the composition of some of its produce – a bowl of cherries involves three members of the family and a bowl of peaches being carried into the room, directly from the garden, by Sir Thomas’ young heir. This would suggest that the garden, as depicted here, was an essential part of the assertion of this family’s status and it is for this reason that it has been included. Unfortunately, whilst it is possible that this was a faithful reproduction of the garden at Charlecote Park, for the purposes of the painting, this was not the most important consideration – the artist has added the garden as part of the overall message and not, regrettably, to record the history of garden design for future generations.

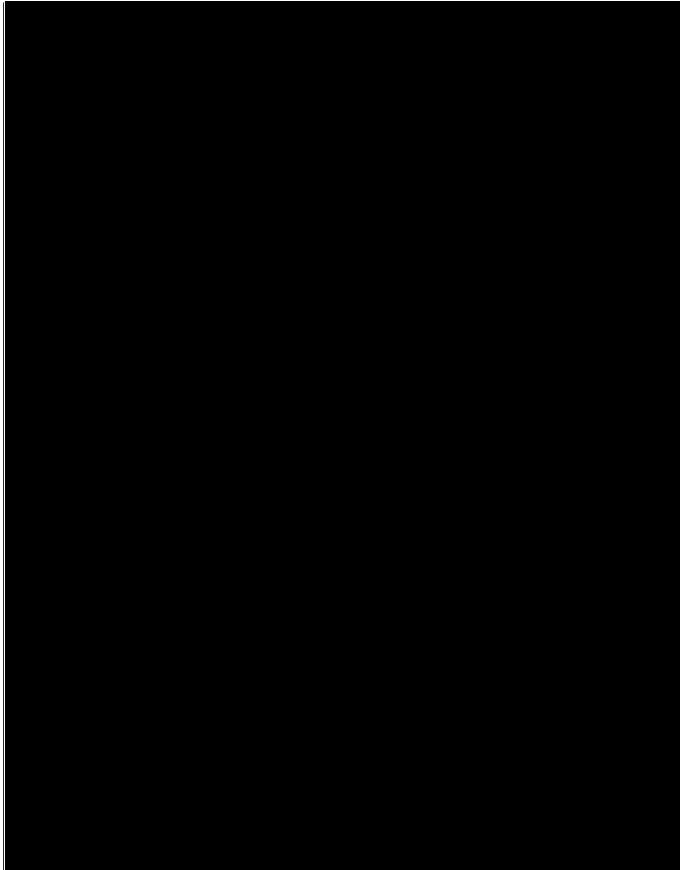
Nevertheless, from the portraits we have looked at here, it is possible to discern a development of the knot garden from the simple compartment as seen in the More portrait, through its more sophisticated execution as seen at Charlecote, to the grand open layout depicted in the Capel family portrait. What none of these portraits show however are the interlacing knot gardens which everyone appears to agree may not have appeared before 1580, but which are placed so crucially in the latter decades of the sixteenth century as a stage in the progressional development of knots from the earlier compartment system to the later geometrical compositions of hedges and cut turf patterns.<sup>13</sup> Evidence for this in any of the portraits is less forthcoming and less persuasive.

In fact, there is only one such painting. A portrait from 1606 of the young Lettice Newdigate is identified as a ‘unique view of an Elizabethan knot garden’ and does clearly

---

<sup>13</sup> Strong, *The Artist and the Garden*, pp. 31-35

show a view of the garden with two interlacing knots in all their complexity.<sup>14</sup> A third knot, made up of a more simple arrangement with a fountain in the centre is also depicted.



**Figure 82 Unknown Artist,  
*Lettice Newdigate aged two*, 1606**  
from Strong, p. 31

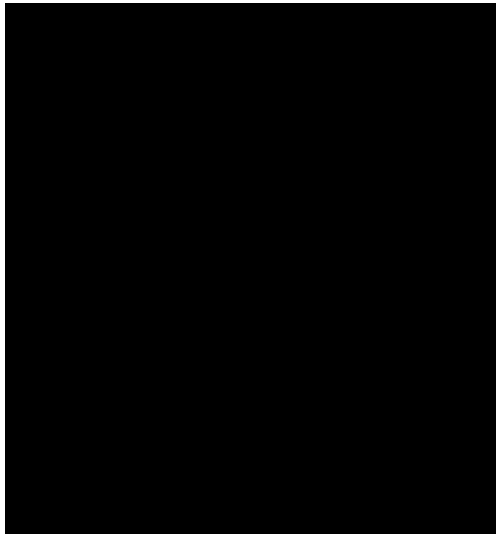
Although the dating of this painting places it outside the Elizabethan era, it is perfectly possible that the garden itself could date from then. However, the fact that it is apparently a unique view of this type of knot is hardly compelling evidence of the prevalence of this style during the late Elizabethan period.

There are other pictorial representations of knot gardens and these occur in maps and plans such as this one of All Souls College, Oxford, dating from the late sixteenth century or

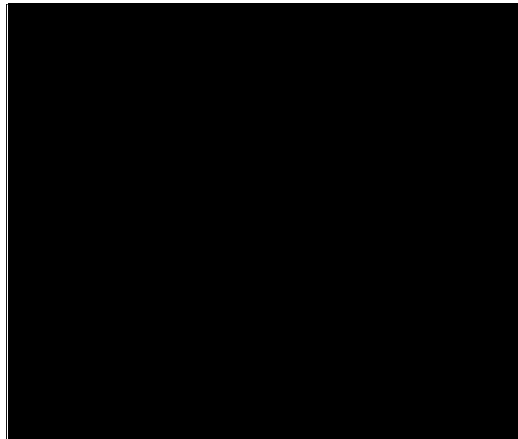
---

<sup>14</sup> Strong, *The Artist and the Garden*, p. 33

these two knot designs depicted in a survey of the garden at the Clothworkers' Hall in London, drawn by Ralph Treswell in 1612.



**Figure 83** Detail from Hovenden's map of  
All Souls, Oxford, c. 1586-1605  
from Strong, p. 34



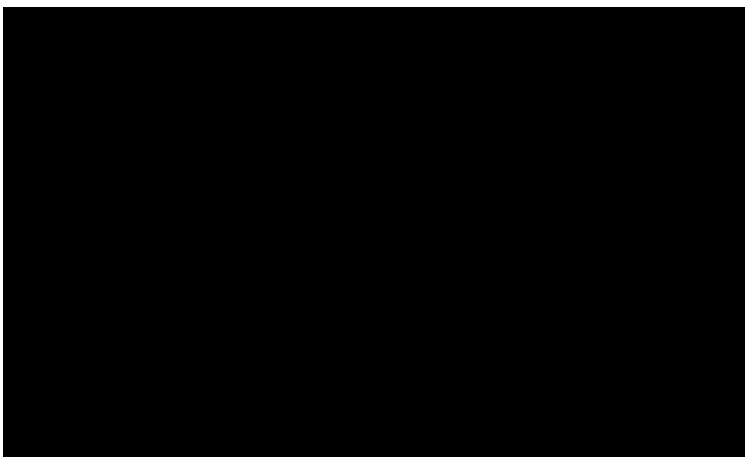
**Figure 84** Detail from Ralph Treswell's Survey  
of the Clothworkers' Hall, London, 1612  
from Treswell, *Surveye*

Both clearly show intricate interlacing knots. However, as is the case in the paintings, whilst these could be accurate representations of the gardens, in the absence of any corroborating evidence there is little reason to assume that they were and it is now becoming possible to put David Jacques' cautionary reservations regarding Tudor knot gardens much more strongly, because it appears that not only is there no evidence at all to prove that early Tudor knots were of interlacing design, there is little evidence to indicate that this design was adopted on any scale at a later date.

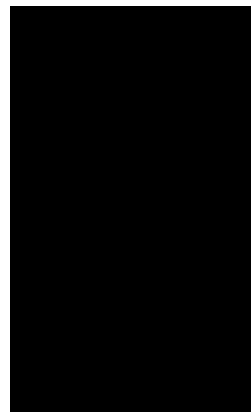
But if this is the case, then where are these images, which allow Tudors gardens to be so confidently reconstructed, coming from? Responses from those actually involved in such projects have proved instructive. Barry Locke, Head Gardener in charge of the gardens at

the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust in Stratford upon Avon has said for instance that the design for the knot garden at New Place was taken, perfectly reasonably, from a contemporary gardening book.<sup>15</sup> Anna Keay, Presentations Director for the English Heritage reconstruction of the Elizabethan garden at Kenilworth Castle also says that in the absence of any other evidence, the designs for the knots there were taken from a book of contemporary French designs, Jacques du Cerceau's *Bastiments de France*.<sup>16</sup> And herein, it would appear, lies the source of our misplaced assumptions and confidence.

Many designs for knot gardens appear ubiquitously in almost all contemporary gardening literature, from Thomas Hyll's *Gardeners Labyrinth* of 1577 through to John Parkinson's *Paradisi in Sole* of 1629 and beyond and a cursory glance would indeed lend weight to the idea of an Elizabethan and early Stuart obsession with intricate knot gardens.



**Figure 85** Knot designs from *The Gardeners Labyrinth*, 1578



**Figure 86** Detail from *All Souls, Oxford*, as above



**Figure 87** Detail from *Lettice Newdigate*, as above

<sup>15</sup> Conversation between Barry Locke and the author, 18 February 2010

<sup>16</sup> Anna Keay, 'Worthy to be called Paradise', paper delivered at the Gardens and Gardening in Early Modern Britain Colloquium, University of Birmingham, 18 June 2011; Jacques Androuet du Cerceau, *Le Premier Volume des plus excellent Bastiments de France* (Paris, 1576)

It becomes immediately obvious that these designs are very similar to those depicted in the maps, plans and paintings considered above and it is hardly surprising that these have been taken as evidence that such designs were a feature of late Elizabethan gardens.

However, there is another possibility to be considered here and that is, that whilst such images may well have been inspiring gardeners to execute these designs in their gardens, it is equally likely that they were similarly providing inspiration for the artists and map makers commissioned to include images of gardens in their work. This idea requires further investigation, and a more careful study of these books reveals a number of interesting points.

First of all, most of the designs for knot gardens that appear in contemporary literature are derivative, and the original source appears to have been an immensely popular gardening book *Maison Rustique*, first published in France in 1564 by Charles Estienne and reprinted numerous times over the rest of the century.<sup>17</sup> The book was also translated into English in 1600 by Richard Surfleet and published as *The Countrie Farme*; reprinted in 1606, then revised, augmented and republished by Gervase Markham in 1616. All three of these editions reproduce sixteen knot designs exactly as they appeared in the original French publication. According to the author, the knot designs that appear in the many manifestations of *Maison Rustique*, are attributed to 'Mounsier Porcher, Prior of Crecy in Brie, the most excellent man in this arte, not only in Fraunce, but also in all Europe'.<sup>18</sup> It is a pity that Mounsier Porcher was not able to copyright his designs, because they appear over and again in numerous subsequent works: they are faithfully reproduced in all six

---

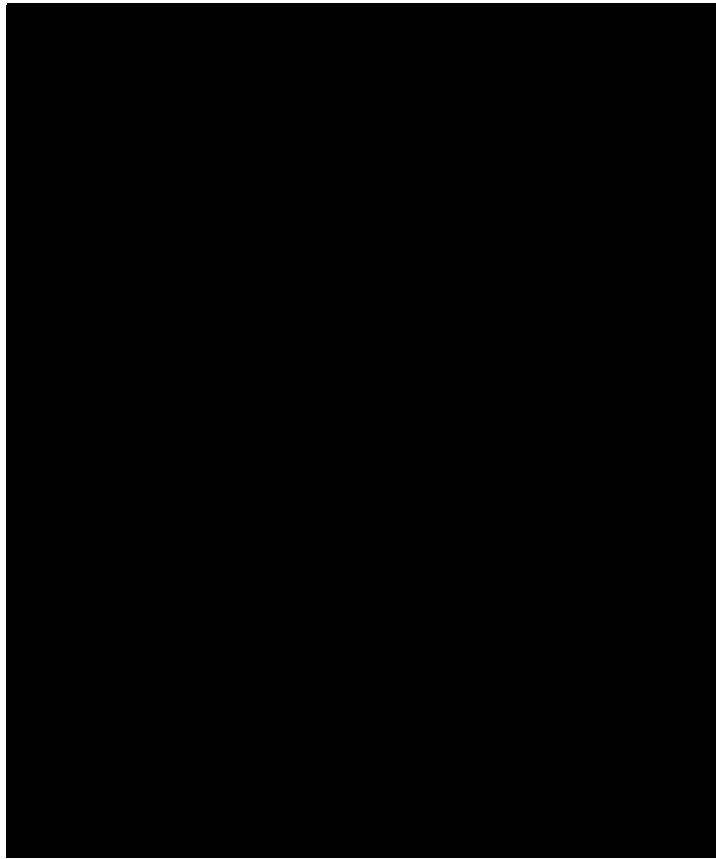
<sup>17</sup> See Chapter 1, pp. 36-38 above for more on the derivative nature of contemporary literature; see also Appendix 1

<sup>18</sup> Surfleet, *The Countrie Farme*, p. 323

editions of the anonymous *Orchard and the Garden* published between 1594 and 1654 and most of them appear in the unattributed *Excellent and New Invented Knots and Mazes* of 1623, which were, based on this evidence, anything but new and invented. Copies of them, although not absolutely identical, are also printed in the 1635 edition of Gervase Markham's *The English Husbandman*, although not the original 1613 edition.

What is curious however, is that despite the appearance of such illustrations, few authors of contemporary gardening manuals actually refer in any detail to the making of knots in their texts. Thomas Hill's *The Gardeners Labyrinth* for instance, contains no mention, other than on the title page. He explains in detail the treading out of paths and alleys so that weeders and gardeners can reach the beds easily: 'The quarters [...] shall in handsome manner by a line set downe in the earth, be trodden out into beds, and seemly borders' he writes. But his considerations in laying out these quarters are wholly practical, not ornamental.

Having said that however, there is a somewhat puzzling illustration in this book of the first complex interlacing knot pattern to appear in an English gardening book and it is unique, in that this design, or indeed anything remotely like it, is not reproduced in any other gardening manuals. David Jacques and Robin Whalley both observe that this design is so complex that it could never have been successfully executed as a garden knot – a fact with which it is difficult to disagree - and suggest that it is more likely to be an embroidery pattern.



**Figure 88 A Proper Knotte,**  
from Thomas Hyll, *The Gardeners Labyrinth*, 1577

Furthermore, there is absolutely no reference to this illustration in Hyll's text and as it appears on a page between the end of Part 1 and the beginning of Part 2 of the book, the likelihood surely is that this illustration was added by the printer to separate the two parts and was probably nothing to do with the author. Later editions of *The Gardeners Labyrinth* also contain other illustrations of knots but again there is no reference to them in the text and again they appear in the pages between the two parts of the book. Gervase Markham's *English Husbandman* also contains instructions on how to lay out a knot or quarter, but like Hyll, his concern is with the practicalities of the ground work – laying out lines, marking alleys and measuring borders – not with the intricacies of laying out complex designs.<sup>19</sup> In fact, although the later edition of this work does contain illustrations

---

<sup>19</sup> Markham, *The English Husbandman*, pp. 112-123



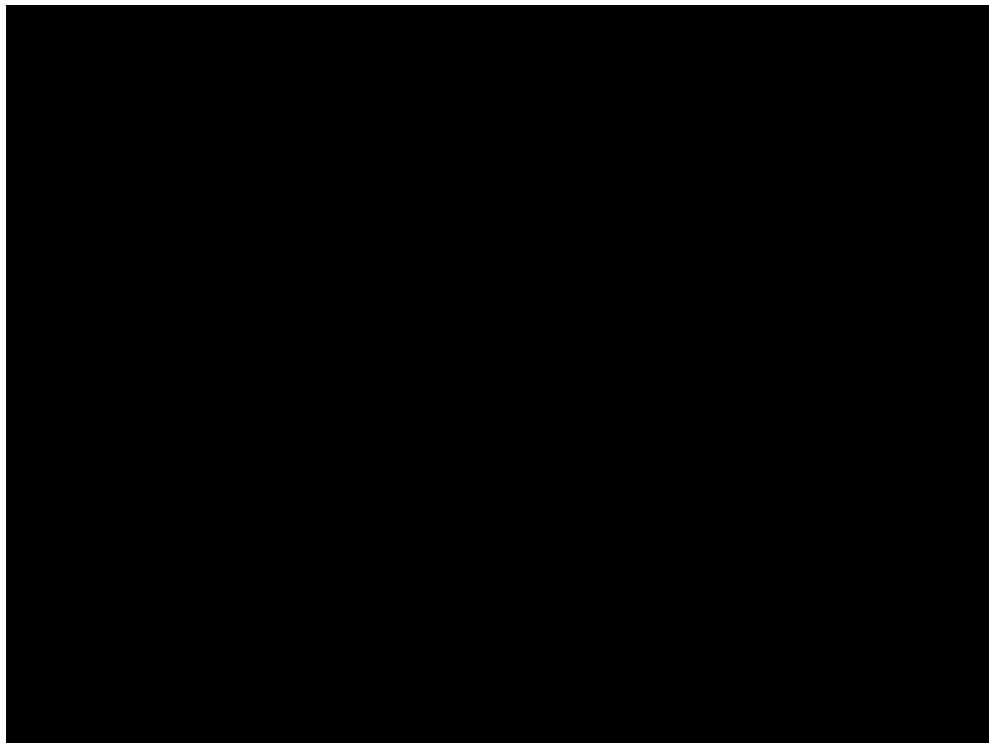
of such knots, once again copied from *Maison Rustique*, Markham makes no reference to these in the text, but specifically refers his readers back to ‘not onely the Country-farme, but also divers other translated bookes’ if they want instruction on how to make more complicated knots.<sup>20</sup>

The constant reuse of these woodcut illustrations coupled with the fact that they are rarely referred to in the texts within which they appear would lead to the conclusion that the images that appeared in these books were in fact the responsibility of the printer rather than the author. And if the printer was commissioning an artist to draw them or an engraver to cut them, then perhaps they would have looked to other printed sources, such as *Maison Rustique*, or more likely the English *Orchard, and the Garden*, for their inspiration, rather than from real gardens. If this was the case, then it follows that the creators of the map of All Souls College and the plan of the Clothworkers’ Hall may well have similarly referred to such sources for their depiction of the knot gardens as they are unlikely to have had the privileged aerial view required to reproduce something so precise. In the same way, the artist who painted Lettice Newdigate’s portrait could have employed this method in his depiction of the knot garden, hence its similarity to designs in these books. It would seem that it is possible therefore to conclude that artists were simply using these designs to depict a representation of an ornamental garden, which may or may not have borne much resemblance to its actual form. We should therefore be cautious of accepting them as proof of what an Elizabethan knot looked like.

---

<sup>20</sup> Markham, *The English Husbandman*, p. 124. Note this is in 1613, before Markham’s own edition of *The Countrie Farme* was published.

The idea that these illustrations may have had little to with the authors of the books is given added weight by comments made about the images by the authors themselves. John Parkinson for instance writes that ‘because many are desirous to see the forme of trayles, knots and other compartiments [...] I have here caused some to be drawne, to satisfie their desires’.<sup>21</sup> His book contains just six designs, derived from Italian sources but other than this, he makes no reference to them in his text. William Lawson likewise writes in his preface to the reader that ‘The Stationer hath [...] bestowed much costs and care in having the Knots and Models by the best Artizan cut in great variety, that nothing may any way be wanting to satisfie the curious desire of those that would make use of this book’, but again he provides no details of how to make the knots or execute the designs.<sup>22</sup>



**Figure 89 Designs for Knots from William Lawson's *Country-Houswives Garden*, 1618**

---

<sup>21</sup> John Parkinson, *Paradisi in Sole* (London, 1629), p. 5

<sup>22</sup> William Lawson, *A New Orchard and Garden [...] with the Country-Houswives Garden* (London, 1618), Preface, sig. A3<sup>v</sup>

The woodcuts to which he refers are simpler than those discussed above, but are equally derivative and appear in the second part of his publication, *The Country-Housewives Garden*. However, he glosses very quickly over how these can actually be achieved: ‘I leave every house-wife to herself’ he offers not particularly helpfully.<sup>23</sup> This is despite the detailed and specific advice on other gardening matters that he gives in the first part of the book, *A New Orchard and Garden* (in which incidentally, there is no mention at all of knot gardens) and has been explained away by the fact that Lawson does not want to overload the simple housewife with too much information – but as yet no-one has addressed the contradiction that he leaves this most complicated of aspects to her own devices!

However, what makes this all more interesting is that, unlike the manuals referred to earlier, both Parkinson and Lawson’s books were not derived from other sources, but were original works based on their own practical experience of gardening. It is therefore even more puzzling that neither of them give any instruction on the making of the kind of knots illustrated in their books. It would seem that this was an area of gardening in which they had little interest or expertise, and in the case of Lawson at least, he has simply resorted, as his predecessors had done, to passing on received wisdom from older French sources without any further input from himself - it has already been noted above that Gervase Markham referred his readers to other translated sources for such advice. But this still leaves the question of why these authors, who were wholly engaged in the practicalities of contemporary gardening, should have no interest whatsoever in the making of intricate knot gardens. Perhaps we should consider that this is because this was simply not an activity in which either they, or their gardening contemporaries, were engaged.

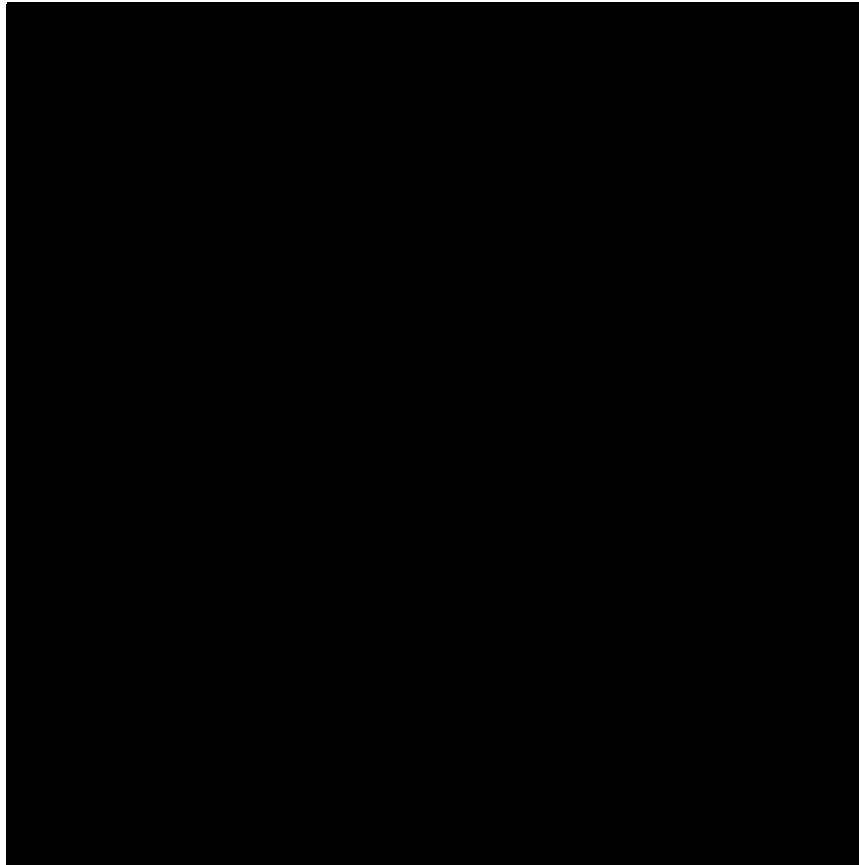
---

<sup>23</sup> Lawson, *New Orchard and Garden*, p. 70

Some final clues which may help define the form of knot gardens in the seventeenth century English garden are offered in a later publication, *Le Jardin de Plaisir*, by the French garden designer André Mollet, first published in 1653, but translated by Mollet himself and published in English in 1670. After working for Charles I in the 1620s and again for Queen Henrietta Maria in 1642, Mollet returned to England soon after the Restoration to work for the King on the garden at St James Palace. This English translation is dedicated to the King so it is likely to have been written somewhere between 1660 and 1665, the year of Mollet's death. The book consists of a number of ideal garden layouts, albeit on a suitable scale for royal palaces and some extremely intricate designs for knots, parterres or ground-works - as noted above Mollet uses the words interchangeably. He also provides detailed descriptions on how to build them, giving measurements down to one twelfth of an inch! Of relevance to this discussion, he talks of two different kinds of knots: 'the Knot in embroidery' and 'the Compartment of Turff'. These, as is immediately clear, are considerably more intricate than anything we have seen illustrated thus far:



**Figure 90 'the Knot in Embroidery'** from Mollet, *The Garden of Pleasure*, 1670, fol. 3



**Figure 91 'the Compartiment of Turff'**  
from Mollet, *The Garden of Pleasure*,  
1670, fol. 4

Of the latter, Mollet writes:

they are more proper for this Country [England] then any other Country in the world by reason that the Gardeners are more expert and skilful in laying and keeping of Turff then any other Country Gardiners. Nevertheless, since it may be this Books fate to cross the Sea, we shall give some short directions to the Out-landish Gardiners, how to chuse the fittest Turff for this use, as also how to keep and order it after the English manner.<sup>24</sup>

This tells us a number of things. Firstly, that it seems to be generally acknowledged that turf knots are suited to the English climate and conditions – cooler temperatures and rain provide us with green and verdant grass and lawns. A French visitor to Hampton Court in

---

<sup>24</sup> André Mollet, *The Garden of Pleasure* (London, 1670), p. 9

1663 described a ‘handsome *parterre* made in grass in the English manner.’<sup>25</sup> Mollet also implies that the method of making turf knots is so well known in England that he does not need to describe it, he only does so for the benefit of ‘Outlandish’ gardeners. The method he describes is surprising – the turf is cut, lifted and ‘plac’t with Art according to the Traces of our Ground-works’.<sup>26</sup> This method could explain how it was possible for the more intricate designs to be executed, and may have been what Thomas Hanmer had in mind when he described the ‘Parterre as the french call them, are often of fine turf, kept low as any greens to bowle on – cut out curiously into Embroidery of flowers, beasts, birds or feuillages’.<sup>27</sup> This method apparently proved less popular in England than the *parterre a l’anglaise* in which the pattern was cut out of the grass as opposed to the other way round.<sup>28</sup> This idea of cut turf work however fits with the few visual depictions we have of earlier examples, such as the garden at Hadham Hall (see **Figure 79** above), as well as making some sense of the references in manuscripts to cutting turfs and cutting knots. The more elaborate cut turf knots referred to by Mollet and Hanmer apparently look forward to the more intricate designs associated with the end of the century, such as the gardens of William and Mary at Hampton Court beautifully illustrated in this plan dated 1702, now partially reconstructed at Hampton Court.<sup>29</sup>

---

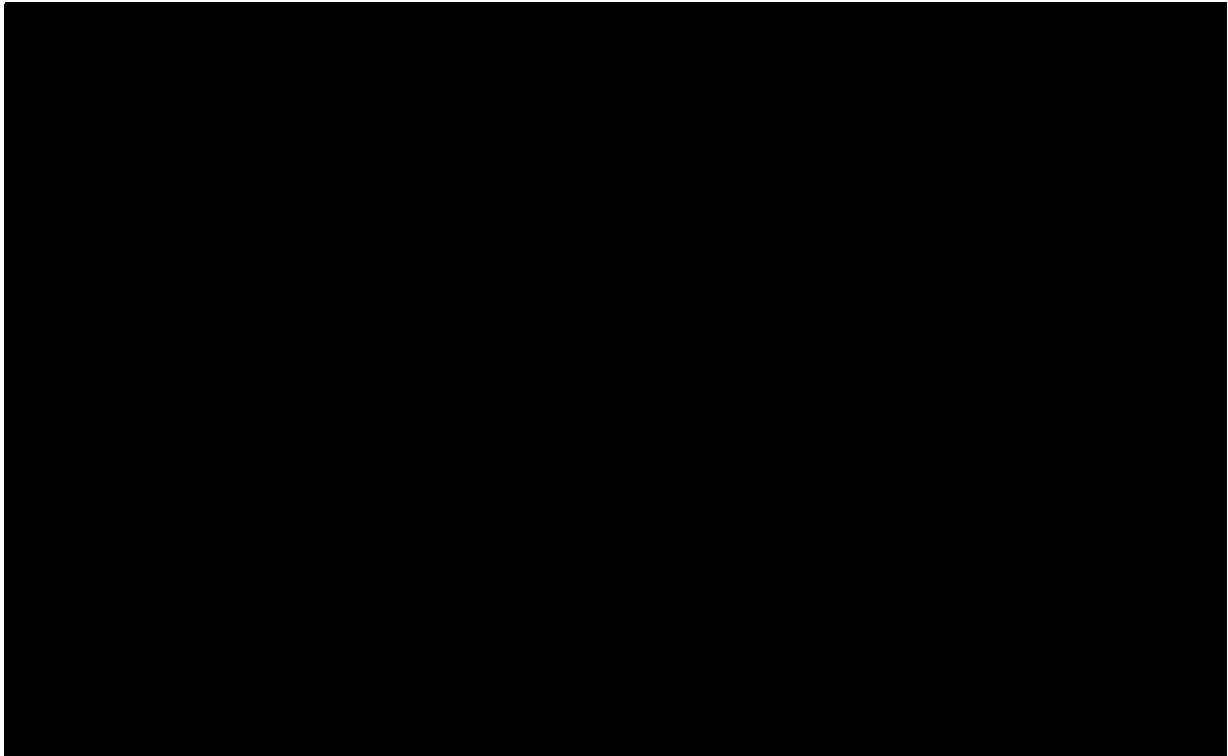
<sup>25</sup> Cited in David Jacques and Arend Jan van der Horst, *The Gardens of William and Mary* (London: Christopher Helm, 1988), p. 26

<sup>26</sup> Mollet, *The Garden of Pleasure*, p. 9

<sup>27</sup> NLW, Bettisfield 1667; also Appendix 4. Hanmer, we remember is unlikely to be describing anything he has seen in England, but rather gardens he has seen in France. See Chapter 3, pp. 219-21 above.

<sup>28</sup> Helen Leach, *Cultivating Myths: Fiction, Fact and Fashion in Garden History* (Auckland: Random House, 2000), p.174

<sup>29</sup> This reconstruction incidentally, as opposed to others referred to here, is based on contemporary plans and illustrations of the garden: Todd Longstaffe-Gowan, ‘Fruit in Historic Gardens’, Garden History Society conference, Hampton Court Palace, 15 November 2008



**Figure 92 Leonard Knyff, *Hampton Court  
from the East*, 1702**  
from Jacques and Horst, *The Gardens of  
William and Mary*, Front jacket illustration

To conclude then, whilst there is plenty of evidence to support the fact that what contemporaries referred to as knot gardens existed well into the seventeenth century, these were more likely to take the form of geometric bordered compartments, which in some cases became more complex and sophisticated throughout the period, eventually giving way to the open cut-turf designs as described by Hanmer and Mollet and observed by the latter as a peculiarly English tradition. It is likely that more elaborate knots did not reach England until later in the seventeenth century when French and Dutch-inspired designs began to appear in royal gardens, but by this time of course, these designs, as has been shown, had also moved on from the interlacing type illustrated in the early seventeenth century manuals.

It would seem then that not only is there very little conclusive evidence of the interlacing knot in the late Elizabethan period, there is in fact, little evidence that they were ever a predominant feature of sixteenth or early seventeenth century gardens. Possible misconceptions regarding this seem to have their roots in the illustrations included in contemporary books which, for the reasons explored, may in fact have borne little resemblance to what people were actually doing in their gardens.



## APPENDIX 4

### TRANSCRIPT OF SIR THOMAS HANMER'S ESSAY ON GARDENING NLW, Bettisfield MSS 1667

This document forms part of a bundle of unbound manuscripts held as part of the Bettisfield archive at the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth. It is undated, but as is discussed in Chapter 1, p. 46 it is likely to have been written by Hanmer as an intended preface to his garden book compiled during the 1650s. It is reasonable to assume therefore that this document dates from the same period. The manuscript is full of alterations, deletions and insertions and in places is extremely difficult to decipher. In 1876, a descendent of Sir Thomas Hanmer, John Lord Hanmer, transcribed this document which was subsequently published in his book *A Memorial of the Parish and Family of Hanmer*.<sup>1</sup> This transcript is neither complete nor particularly accurate, John Hanmer simply leaving out the parts he couldn't read or adding his own interpretation instead. Nevertheless John Hanmer's transcript was printed *verbatim* in the Introduction to *The Garden Book of Sir Thomas Hanmer*, when the manuscript version of Sir Thomas' book was eventually published in 1933. This inaccurate transcript has inevitably been used and quoted ever since. Some of the shortcomings of John Hanmer's transcript have been noted by Ruth Duthie in an article of 1990, where an accurate transcription of a part of the manuscript has been reproduced.<sup>2</sup> What follows is the complete document, transcribed from Thomas Hanmer's original manuscript held in the Bettisfield archive. It offers a rare insight into contemporary gardening practice in England and in France, both within Hanmer's own experience, with his observations on how things had changed in recent years.

---

<sup>1</sup> John Hanmer, *A Memorial of the Parish and Family of Hanmer* (London: Chiswick Press, 1877), pp. 95-98

<sup>2</sup> Ruth Duthie, 'The Planting Plans of Some seventeenth-Century Flower Gardens', *GH*, 18:2 (1990), pp. 83-88

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### **Manuscript Sources**

Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, Bettisfield Estate Records:

B1663  
B1666  
B1667  
26  
53  
573  
925  
1165  
1182

California, Huntington Library, Temple Family Papers:

ST38  
ST43  
ST40  
ST452  
STT2324-2334  
STT2143-2155  
STT2276-2302  
STT2347  
STT2271  
STT CL&I Box 1 (28)  
STT CL&I Box 1 (36)

City of London, Guildhall Library:

Records of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners, MS 3389-3390  
'Agas' Map of London  
Copperplate Map of London  
Faithorne and Newcourt Map of London  
Various estate maps and plans, including the Estate in Old Street

Isle of Wight Records Office, The Oglander Collection:

OG/AA/14  
OG/AA/26-31

London, British Library, Evelyn Papers, Additional Manuscripts:

15857  
15858  
78220  
78221  
78298  
78303  
78515  
78610A-M  
78613  
78628A  
78628B

London, British Library, Pelham Papers, Additional Manuscripts:

33145  
33147

London, Clothworkers' Company Archive:

*Surveye of all the Landes and Tenements belonging to the Worshipfull Company of the  
Clothworkers of London*

Leeds, West Yorkshire Archive Service, Temple Newsam MSS:

WYL100/EA/13/9  
WYL178/4

Staffordshire Records Office, The Sutherland Collection:

D593/R/1/2  
D593/H/3/339  
D593/H/3/341

Stratford upon Avon, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust Records Office:

PR313  
PR316

## Primary Printed Sources

Androuet du Cerceau, Jacques, *Le premier volume des plus excellents bastiments de France* (Paris, 1576; repr. Westmead, England: Gregg International, 1972)

Anon, *Certaine excellent and new invented knots and mazes* (London, 1623)

Anon, *The Countryman's Recreation* (London, 1640)

Anon, *The Orchard, and the Garden* (London, 1594)

Anon, *The Expert Gardener* (London, 1640)

*Aubrey's Natural History of Wiltshire*, introduced by K. G. Ponting (Newton Abbot: David and Charles Reprints, 1969)

Austen, Ralph, *Treatise on Fruit Trees* (Oxford, 1653)

Bacon, Francis, 'Of Gardens' (1625) in *The Genius of the Place: the English Landscape Garden 1620-1820*, ed. by John Dixon Hunt and Peter Ellis (London: Paul Elek, 1975; repr. London: MIT Press, 1988), pp. 51-56

Bamford, Francis, ed., *A Royalist's Notebook: The Commonplace Book of Sir John Oglander* (London: Constable, 1936)

Barker, Thomas, *The Countryman's Recreation* (London, 1654)

Beale, John, *Herefordshire Orchards: A Pattern for all England* (London, 1657)

Bekkers, J., ed., *Correspondence of John Morris with Johannes de Laet* (1634-1649) (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1970)

Bonnefons, Nicolas, *The French Gardiner*, transl. by John Evelyn (London, 1658)

Bowen, Lloyd, ed., *Family and Society in Early Stuart Glamorgan: The Household Accounts of Sir Thomas Aubrey of Llantrithyd, c. 1565-1641* (Cardiff: South Wales Record Society, 2006)

*Calendar of Wynn (of Gwydir) Papers* (Aberystwyth: National Library of Wales, 1926)

Cartwright, John, ed., *The Memoirs of Sir John Reresby of Thrybergh, 1634-1689 written by himself* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1875)

*The Diary of Baron Waldstein: A Traveller in Elizabethan England*, transl. by G. W. Groos (London: Thames and Hudson, c.1981)

*The Diary of John Evelyn*, ed. by E. S. De Beer, 6 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955)

*The Diary of Ralph Josselin, 1616-1683*, ed. by Alan MacFarlane (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991)

Estienne, Charles, *L'agriculture et Maison Rustique* (Paris, 1564; [3<sup>rd</sup>?] edn. Paris, 1572; [6<sup>th</sup>?] edn., Paris 1598)

Evelyn, John, *Acetaria: or a Discourse of Sallets* (London, 1699)

Evelyn, John, *Elysium Britannicum, or the Royal Gardens in Three Books*, ed. by John E. Ingram (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, c.2001)

Evelyn, John, *Kalendarium Hortense: or the gard'ners almanac* (London, 1664)

Evelyn, John, *Sylva: or a Discourse of Forest-Trees* (London, 1664)

Fitzherbert, John, *The Book of Husbandry*, ed. by Rev. W. Skeat (reprinted from the edition of 1534; London: Trübner, 1882)

Gardiner, Richard, *Profitable instructions for the manuring, sowing, and planting of kitchin gardens* (London, 1599)

Gerard, John, *The Herball, or Generall Historie of Plants* (London, 1597)

Gerard, John, *The Herball, or Generall Historie of Plants*, ed. by Thomas Johnson (London, 1633; 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, London, 1636)

Gray, Todd, ed., *Devon Household Accounts, 1627-59, Part 1: Sir Richard and Lady Lucy Reynall of Forde (1627-48), John Willoughby of Leyhill (1644-6) and Sir Edward Wise of Sydenham (1655-9)*, (Exeter: Devon and Cornwall Record Society, 1995)

Gray, Todd, ed., *Devon Household Accounts, 1627-59, Part 2: Henry, fifth Earl of Bath, and Rachel, Countess of Bath, of Tawstoc* (Exeter: Devon and Cornwall Record Society, 1996)

Hanmer, Thomas, *The Garden Book of Thomas Hanmer*, 'Now first printed from the MS volume of 1659 under the care of Ivy Elstob', with an Introduction by Eleanour Sinclair Rohde (London: Gerald Howe, 1933; repr. Mold: Clwyd County Library and Information Service, 1991)

Harrison, William, *The Description of England* (1587), ed. by Georges Edelen (Washington: Folger Shakespeare Library and New York: Dover, 1994)

Hartlib, Samuel, *His legacie: A Discourse of Husbandry*, London, 1651

Hentzner, Paul, *A Journey into England in the year 1598* (Printed at Strawberry Hill 1757, reprinted at the private press of T. E. Williams, Reading, 1807)

Heresbach, Conrad, *Foure Bookes of Husbandry*, Newly Englished and increased by Barnebe Googe (London, 1577; photofacsimile edn, New York: Da Capo Press, 1971)

HMC, *Report on the MSS of Lord De L'Isle and Dudley at Penshurst Place*, 6 vols (London: HMSO, 1925-66)

Hyll, Thomas, *A most briefe and pleasaunte treatise, teachynge how to dresse, sowe, and set a garden* (London, [1558?]; 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, London, 1563)

Hyll, Thomas, *The Gardeners Labyrinth* (London, 1577; 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, London, 1578; 3<sup>rd</sup> edn, London, 1586)

Hyll, Thomas, *The Gardeners Labyrinth*, ed. by Richard Mabey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988)

Hyll, Thomas, *The Proffitable Arte of Gardening, nowe the third tyme set fourth* (London, 1568)

Hyll, Thomas, *The Profitable Art of Gardening now the third time set forth* (4<sup>th</sup> edn, London, 1579)

*The King James Bible* (1611), (edn. repr. London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1862)

Kuin, R.J.P., ed., *Robert Langham, A Letter* (Leiden: Brill, 1938)

Lawson, William, *A New Orchard and Garden [...] with the Country-Houswives Garden*, (London, 1618; photofacsimile edn, with an introduction by Malcolm Thick, Totnes: Prospect Books, 2003)

McClure, Norman, ed., *The Letters of John Chamberlain* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1939)

Markham, Gervase, *The English Housewife* (1615), ed. by Michael Best (Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1986)

Markham, Gervase, *The English Husbandman: The First Part* (London, 1613)

Markham, Gervase, *The English Husbandman* (London, 1635)

Markham, Gervase, *Maison Rustique, or the Countrey Farme* (London, 1616)

Markham, Gervase, *The Second Book of the English Husbandman* (London, 1614)

Marsh, Bower and John Ainsworth, eds, *Records of the Worshipful Company of Carpenters, V: Warden's Account Book 1571-1599* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1937)

Mascall, Leonard, *A booke of the Arte and Maner how to plant and graffe all sortes of trees* (London, 1572)

*The Memoirs of Ann Lady Fanshawe* (repr. from the original MSS, London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1907)

Mollet, André, *Le Jardin de Plaisir = Der Lust Gartten = The Garden of Pleasure* (Uppsala, Sweden: Gyllene Snittet, 2007, facsimile edn. of original published London, 1670)

Morin, Pierre, *Catalogues de quelques Plantes a Fleurs qui sont de present au jardin de Pierre Morin le jeune, dit Troisieme, Fleuriste* (Paris, 1651)

Munby, Lionel M., ed., *Early Stuart Household Accounts* (Cambridge: Hertfordshire Record Society, 1986)

Parkinson, John, *Paradisi in Sole, Paradisus Terrestris: or, A Garden of all Sorts of Pleasant Flowers* (London, 1629; photofacsimile edn, New York: Dover, 1976)

Parkinson, John, *Paradisi in Sole, Paradisus Terrestris: or, A Garden of all Sorts of Pleasant Flowers* (London, 1629; edn. annotated by John Tradescant, held in Bodleian Library, Oxford, Antiq.c.E.1629)

Parkinson, John, *Theatrum Botanicum: The Theater of Plants* (London, 1640)

Peacham, Henry, *The Compleat Gentleman: fashioning him absolut in the most necessary and commendable qualities concerning minde or bodie that may be required in a noble gentleman* (London, 1622; facsimile edn, New York: Da Capo Press, 1968)

Plot, Robert, *The Natural History of Staffordshire* (Oxford, 1686)

*The Private Life of an Elizabethan Lady: The Diary of Lady Margaret Hoby, 1599-1605*, ed. by Joanna Moody (Stroud: Sutton , 1998)

Rae, John, *Flora, De Florum Cultura or, A Complete Florilege* (London, 1665)

Schofield, John, *The London Surveys of Ralph Treswell* (London: London Topographical Society, 1987)

Scot, Reynolde, *A perfite platform of a hoppe garden* (London, 1574)

Smith, Thomas, *De Republica Angorum* (London, 1583)

Stow, John, *A Survey of London written in the year 1598* (edn. repr. Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2005)

Surflet, Richard, *Maison Rustique, or the Countrie Farme* (London, 1600; 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, London, 1606)

Tusser, Thomas, *A Hundred Good points of Husbandry* (1557) in *The English Garden: Literary Sources and Documents*, ed. by Michael Charlesworth, 3 vols (Robertsbridge: Helm, 1993), I

Wilson, Sir Thomas, *The State of England* (1600) in *The Camden Society*, Third series, 52, Miscellany volume 16, ed. by F. J. Fisher (London, 1936)

Woodward, Marcus, ed., *Gerard's Herball: the essence thereof distilled* (London: Minerva, 1971)

Wotton, Henry, *The Elements of Architecture* (1624) in *Relequiae Wottonianae* (London, 1654, pp. 269-71; also repr. in *The Genius of the Place*, ed. by Hunt and Ellis), pp. 48-50

## Secondary Sources

Amussen, Susan, *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in early modern England* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988)

Anderson, Sonia, 'The Elder William Trumbull: A Biographical Sketch', *British Library Journal*, 19 (1993), 115-132

Alcock, Nathaniel, *Warwickshire Grazier and London Skinner, 1532 - 1555: The Account Book of Peter Temple and Thomas Heritage* (London: for The British Academy by the Oxford University Press, 1981)

Atherton, Ian and Julie Sanders, eds, *The 1630s: interdisciplinary essays on culture and politics in the Caroline era*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006)

Barnard, John, and D. F. McKenzie, eds, *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, Vol 4, 1567-1695* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002)

Barnes, Melvin, *Root and Branch: A History of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners of London* (London: The Worshipful Company of Gardeners, 1994)

Barry, Jonathan and Christopher Brooks, eds, *The Middling Sort of People: culture, society and politics in England, 1550-1800* (Basingstoke: McMillan, 1994)

Berry, Christopher, *The Idea of Luxury* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994)

Broad, John, *Transforming English Rural Society: The Verneys and the Claydons 1600-1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004)

*Bryan's Dictionary of Painters and Engravers*, 5 vols (4<sup>th</sup> edn, revised by George Williamson, London: Bell, 1909)



Bryson, Anna, *From Courtesy to Civility: Changing Codes of Conduct in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998)

Bryson, Anna, 'The Rhetoric of Status: Gesture, Demeanour and the Image of the Gentleman in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century England' in *Renaissance Bodies*, ed. by Lucy Gent and Nigel Llewellyn (London: Reaktion Books, 1990), pp. 136-153

Bushnell, Rebecca, *Green Desire: Imagining Early Modern English Gardens* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2003)

Charlton, K., 'The Professions in Sixteenth Century England', *University of Birmingham Historical Journal*, 12 (1969), 20-41

Chartres, John, *Internal Trade in England, 1500-1700* (London: McMillan, 1977)

Christianson, C. Paul, *The Riverside Gardens of Thomas More's London* (London: Yale University Press, 2005)

Cliffe, John, *The World of the Country House in Seventeenth Century England* (London: Yale University Press, 1999)

Cressy, David, *Literacy and the Social Order: Reading and Writing in Tudor and Stuart England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980)

Crisp, Frank, *Mediaeval Gardens* (London, 1924; repr. New York: Hacker Art Books, 1979)

Culver-Campbell, Maggie, *The Origin of Plants* (London: Transworld, 2001; repr. Eden Project Books, 2004)

Darley, Gillian, *John Evelyn: Living for Ingenuity* (London: Yale University Press, c.2006)

Cust, Richard and Ann Hughes, eds, *Conflict in early Stuart England: studies in religion and politics, 1603-1642* (Harlow: Longman, 1989)

Dawson, W. H., *Cromwell's Understudy: The Life and Times of General John Lambert* (London: Hodge, 1938)

Duthie, Ruth, 'The Planting Plans of some Seventeenth-century Flower Gardens', *GH*, 18:2 (1990), 77-102

Dyer, Chris, 'Gardens and Garden Produce in the later Middle Ages' in *Food in Medieval England*, ed. by C. M. Woolgar, D. Sargeantson and T. Waldron (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 28-40

Fagan, Brian, *The Little Ice Age: How Climate Made History 1300-1800* (New York: Basic Books, 2000)

- Findlen, Paula, 'Francis Bacon and the Reform of Natural History in the Seventeenth Century' in *History and the Disciplines*, ed. by Donald Kelley (Woodbridge: University of Rochester Press, 1997), pp. 239-260
- Fisher, Frederick J., *London and the English Economy, 1500 -1700*, ed. by P. Corfield and N. Harte (London: Hambledon Press, 1989)
- Fletcher, Anthony, *A County Community in Peace and War: Sussex 1600-1660* (London: Longman, 1975)
- Freidman, Alice T., *House and Household in Elizabethan England: Wollaton Hall and the Willoughby Family* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1989)
- Freidman, Alice T., 'Inside Out: Women, Domesticity, and the Pleasures of the City' in *Material London*, ed. by Lena Cowen Orlin (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), pp. 232-250
- Gamini, Salgado, *The Elizabethan Underworld* (London: Book Club Associates, 1977)
- Gay, Edwin F., 'The Rise of an English Country Family: Peter and John Temple, to 1603', *HLQ*, 1:4 (1938), 367-390
- Gay, Edwin, F., 'The Temples of Stowe and their Debts: Sir Thomas and Sir Peter Temple, 1603-1653', *HLQ*, 2:4 (1939), 399-438
- Girouard, Mark, *Robert Smythson and the Elizabethan Country House* (London: Yale University Press, 1983)
- Goldgar, Anne, *Tulipmania: Money, Honor, and Knowledge in the Dutch Golden Age* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2008)
- Gunther, R. T., *Early British Botanists and their Gardens* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1922)
- Gunther, R. T., 'The Garden of Rev. Walter Stonehouse', *Gardeners' Chronicle*, 15 May 1920
- Hadfield, Miles, *The History of British Gardening* (London: John Murray, 1960)
- Hanmer, John, 1st Baron, *A Memorial of the Parish and Family of Hanmer in Flintshire* (London: Chiswick Press, 1877)
- Harkness, Deborah, *The Jewel House: Elizabethan London and the Scientific Revolution* (London: Yale University Press, 2007)
- Harris, John and Gordon Higgot, eds, *Inigo Jones: Complete Architectural Drawings* (London: Philip Wilson, 1974)
- Harvey, John, *Early Gardening Catalogues* (London: Phillimore, 1972)

- Harvey, John, *Early Nurserymen* (London: Phillimore, 1974)
- Harvey, John, *Mediaeval Gardens* (London: Batsford, 1981)
- Harvey, John, 'Vegetables in the Middle Ages', *GH*, 12:2 (1984), 89-99
- Harvey, John, 'William Lawson and his Garden', *Country Life*, 28 October 1982, 1338-40
- Harwood, Edward, Tom Williamson, Michael Leslie and John Dixon Hunt, 'Whither Garden History', *Studies in the History of Gardens and Designed Landscapes*, 27:2 (2007), 91-112
- Hazlitt, William, *The Livery Companies of the City of London* (New York: B. Blom, 1969)
- Heal, Felicity, 'Food Gifts, The Household and the Politics of Exchange in Early Modern England', *Past and Present*, 199 (2008), 41-70
- Heal, Felicity, 'The Idea of Hospitality in Early Modern England', *Past and Present*, 102 (1984), 66-93
- Heal, Felicity and Clive Holmes, *The Gentry in England and Wales 1500-1700* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1994; repr. Palgrave, 2002)
- Henderson, Paula, 'Clinging to the past: medievalism in the English 'Renaissance' garden', *Renaissance Studies*, 25:1 (2011), 42-69
- Henderson, Paula, *The Tudor House and Garden* (London: Yale University Press, 2005)
- Henrey, Blanche, *British Botanical and Horticultural Literature before 1800*, 3 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), I, The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: history and bibliography
- Hobhouse, Penelope, *Plants in Garden History* (London: Pavilion, 1992)
- Holmes, Geoffrey, *Augustan England: Professions, State and Society, 1680-1730* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982)
- Howarth, David, *Lord Arundel and his Circle* (London: Yale University Press, 1985)
- Hoyles, Martin, *Gardeners' Delight: Gardening Books from 1560-1960*, (London: Pluto Press, 1994)
- Hoyles, Martin, *The Story of Gardening* (London: Journeyman Press, 1991)
- Hunt, John Dixon, 'Evelyn's Idea of a Garden' in *John Evelyn's 'Elysium Britannicum' and European Gardening*, ed. by Therese O'Malley and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 1998), pp. 269-288

- Hunt, John Dixon and Peter Ellis, eds, *The Genius of the Place: the English Landscape Garden 1620-1820* (London: Paul Elek, 1975; repr. London: MIT Press, 1988)
- Hunter, Lynette, 'Books for daily life: household, husbandry, behaviour' in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, Vol 4, 1567-1695*, ed. by John Barnard and D. F. McKenzie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 514-30
- Hunter, Michael, *Establishing the New Science: The Experience of the early Royal Society* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1989)
- Hunter, Michael, 'John Evelyn in the 1650s: A Virtuoso in Quest of a Role' in *John Evelyn's 'Elysium Britannicum' and European Gardening*, ed. by Therese O'Malley and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1998), pp. 79-106
- Hunter, Michael, *The Royal Society and its Fellows, 1660-1700 : the morphology of an early scientific institution* (Chalfont St. Giles: British Society for the History of Science, 1982)
- Ingram, John, 'John Evelyn's *'Elysium Britannicum'*: Provenance, Condition, Transcription' in *John Evelyn's 'Elysium Britannicum' and European Gardening*, ed. by Therese O'Malley and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1998), pp. 35-56
- Jacques, David, 'The Chief Ornament' of Gray's Inn: The walks from Bacon to Brown', *GH*, 17:1 (1989), 41-67
- Jacques, David, 'The Compartment System in Tudor England', *GH*, 27:1 (1999), 32-53
- Jacques, David, 'Who Knows What a Dutch Garden Is?', *GH*, 30:2 (2002), 114-130
- Jacques, David and Arend Jan van der Horst, *The Gardens of William and Mary* (London: Christopher Helm, 1988)
- Johnson, F. R., 'Notes on English Retail Book Prices', *The Library*, 5th Series, 5 (1950), 83-178
- Johnson, F. R., 'Thomas Hill: An Elizabethan Huxley', *HLQ*, 7:4 (1944), 329-351
- Laird, Mark, 'Perpetual Spring' or Tempestuous Fall: The Greenhouse and The Great Storm of 1703 in the Life of John Evelyn and his Contemporaries', *GH*, 34:2 (2006), 153-173
- Lamb, Hubert, *Climate, History and the Modern World* (London: Routledge, 1995)
- Landsberg, Sylvia, *The Medieval Garden* (London: British Museum Press, 1995)
- Le Roy Ladurie, E., 'History and Climate' in *Economy and Society in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Peter Burke (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), pp. 134-169

- Leach, Helen, *Cultivating Myths: Fiction, Fact and Fashion in Garden History* (Auckland: Random House, 2000)
- Leighton, Anne, *Early English Gardens in New England: 'for meate or medicine'* (London: Cassell, 1970)
- Leith-Ross, Prudence, 'The Garden of John Evelyn at Deptford', *GH*, 25:2 (1997), 138-152
- Leith-Ross, Prudence, *The John Tradescants: Gardeners to the Rose and Lily Queen* (London: Peter Owen, 1984)
- Leith-Ross, Prudence, 'A Seventeenth Century Paris Garden', *GH*, 21:2 (1993), 150-157
- Leslie, Michael and Timothy Raylor, eds, *Culture and Cultivation in early modern England: Writing and the Land* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992)
- Lindahl, Goran, 'André Mollet, Le Jardin de Plaisir', *Reviews, GH*, 32:2 (2004), 286-289
- Lombardo, Alberto, *Views of Villa D'Este in the XVII century* (Rome: Palombi, 2005)
- Love, Harold, 'Oral and Scribal Texts in Early Modern England' in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain, Vol 4, 1567-1695*, ed. by John Barnard and D. F. McKenzie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 97-121
- Love, Harold, *Scribal Publication in the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993)
- Morrill, John, ed., *The Oxford Illustrated History of Tudor and Stuart Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996)
- Mowl, Timothy, *Elizabethan and Jacobean Style* (London: Phaidon, 1993)
- Mowl, Timothy, *Gentlemen and Players: Gardeners of the English Landscape* (Stroud: Sutton, 2000)
- Munroe, Jennifer, 'Gender, Class, and the Art of Gardening: Gardening Manuals in early modern England', *Prose Studies*, 28:2 (2006), 197-210
- O'Day, Rosemary, *The Professions in Early Modern England, 1450 - 1800* (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2000)
- O'Malley, Therese and Joachim Wolschke-Bulmahn, eds, *John Evelyn's 'Elysium Britannicum' and European Gardening* (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks, 1998)
- Orlin, Lena Cowen, ed., *Material London, c.1600* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000)

- Pagan, Victoria, *Rome and the Literature of Gardens* (London: Duckworth, 2006)
- Palliser, D., 'The Trade Gilds of Tudor York' in *Crisis and Order in English Towns*, ed. by Peter Clark and Paul Slack (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), pp. 86-116
- Parkinson, Anna, *Nature's Alchemist: John Parkinson, Herbalist to Charles I* (London: Francis Lincoln, 2007)
- Pavord, Anna, *The Tulip* (London: Bloomsbury, 2000)
- Peck, Linda, *Consuming Splendor* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005)
- Pennington, David, 'Beyond the Moral Economy: Economic Change, Ideology and the 1621 House of Commons', *Parliamentary History*, 25:2 (2006), 214-231
- Phillips, John and Nicholas Burnett, 'The Chronology and Layout of Francis Carew's Garden at Beddington, Surrey', *GH*, 33:2 (2005), 155-188
- Porter, Roy, *Blood and Guts: A Short History of Medicine* (London: Penguin, 2003)
- Prest, Wilfred, ed., *The Professions in Early Modern England* (London: Croom Helm, c.1987)
- Rappaport, Steve, *Worlds within worlds: structures of life in sixteenth century London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989)
- Riddle, John R. D., 'John Parkinson's Long Acre Garden 1600-1650', *Journal of Garden History*, 6:2 (1986), 112-124
- Roberts, Judith, 'The Gardens of the Gentry in the late Tudor Period', *GH*, 27:1 (1999), 89-108
- Robinson, Jenny, 'New Light on Sir Thomas Hanmer', *GH*, 16:1 (1988), 1-7
- Sacks, David, 'London's Dominion' in *Material London*, ed. by Lena Cowen Orlin (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), pp. 20-54
- Samson, Alex, 'Locus amoenus: gardens and horticulture in the Renaissance', *Renaissance Studies*, 25:1 (2011), 1-23
- Schama, Simon, *The Embarrassment of Riches* (London: Fontana, 1988)
- Sharpe, Kevin and Peter Lake, *Culture and Politics in Early Stuart England* (Basingstoke: McMillan, 1994)
- Skinner, Quentin, 'Thomas Hobbs and the nature of the early Royal Society', *The Historical Journal*, 12:2 (1969), 217-239

- Skinner, Quentin, *Visions of Politics*, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), II: Renaissance Virtues
- Small, Carola and Alistair, 'John Evelyn and the Garden of Epicurus', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 60 (1997), 194-214
- Strong, Roy, *The Artist and the Garden* (London: Yale University Press, 2000)
- Strong, Roy, *The Renaissance Garden in England* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1979)
- Strong, Roy, 'The Renaissance Garden in England Reconsidered', *GH*, 27:1 (1999), 2-9
- Thick, Malcolm, *The Neat House Gardens: Early Market Gardening around London* (Totnes: Prospect Books, 1998)
- Thirsk, Joan, ed., *The Agrarian History of England and Wales, Vol. 4 (1500-1640)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991)
- Thirsk, Joan, *Food in Early Modern England: Phases, Fads, Fashions 1500-1760* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2007)
- Thirsk, Joan, 'Making a Fresh Start: Sixteenth Century Agriculture and the Classical Inspiration' in *Culture and Cultivation in early modern England*, ed. by Michael Leslie and Timothy Raylor (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), pp. 15-34
- Thomas, Keith, *The Ends of Life: Roads to Fulfilment in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009)
- Thomas, Keith, *Man and the Natural World* (London: Penguin, 1984)
- Thompson, Elspeth, 'Stalls or Circle?', *The Garden* (April, 2010), 234-39
- Thrush, Andrew and John Ferris, *The House of Commons 1604-1629, Vol. 5* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010)
- Todd, Margo, *Christian Humanism and the Puritan Social Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987)
- Walker, Garthine, *Crime, Gender and Social Order in early modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003)
- Wall, Cecil, *The History of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries* (London: Oxford University Press for the Wellcome Historical Medical Museum, 1963)
- Warkentin, Germaine, *The Queen's Majesty's Passage and related documents* (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, University of Toronto, 2004)
- Watt, Tessa, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991)

- Webber, Ronald, *The Early Horticulturists* (Newton Abbot: David and Charles, 1968)
- Welch, Charles, *The History of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners* (London, 1900)
- Whalley, Robin and Anne Jennings, *Knot Gardens and Parterres* (London: Barn Elms, 1998)
- Whittle, Elizabeth, *The Historic Gardens of Wales* (London: HMSO, 1992)
- Williams, Raymond, *The Country and the City* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1973)
- Williamson, Tom, *Polite Landscapes: Gardens and Society in eighteenth century England* (Stroud: Sutton, 1995)
- Wisker, Richard, 'The First Trentham Hall', *Staffordshire History*, 24 (1996), 6-14
- Woodbridge, Kenneth, *Princely Gardens: The origins and development of the French formal style* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986)
- Woudstra, Jan and Sally O'Halloran, 'Sir John Reresby's Garden Notebook and Garden (1633-44) at Thrybergh, Yorkshire', *GH*, 36:1 (2008), 135-193
- Wrightson, Keith, *Earthly Necessities: Economic Lives in Early Modern Britain* (London: Yale University Press, 2000)
- Wrightson, Keith, 'Sorts of People in Tudor and Stuart England' in *The Middling Sort of People*, ed. by John Barry and Christopher Brooks (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1994), pp. 28-51
- 'A Document concerning Shakespeare's Garden', *HLB*, 1 (1931), 199-201 (no author attributed)
- National Trust Magazine, No. 114, Autumn 2008

### **Unpublished theses and conference papers**

- Marsh, David John Edward, 'Gardens and Gardeners of later Stuart London' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of London, July 2004)
- Sheeter, Naomi, 'Harnessing Nature: Gardens and Science in John Evelyn's England, 1650-1710 (unpublished M.Phil. thesis, University of Birmingham, July 2000)
- Keay, Anna, 'Worthy to be called Paradise': The Recreation of the Elizabethan Garden at Kenilworth Castle (paper delivered at the Gardens and Gardening in Early Modern Britain Colloquium, University of Birmingham, 18 June 2011)



Longstaffe-Gowan, Todd, 'Fruit in Historic Gardens', Garden History Society conference, Hampton Court Palace, 15 November 2008, guided tour of the gardens

## Online Resources and Websites

Access to Archives [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)

Bibliography of British and Irish History (formerly the RHS Bibliography Online) [www.history.ac.uk](http://www.history.ac.uk) or [www.rhs.ac.uk](http://www.rhs.ac.uk)

Bibliothèque Nationale de France [www.bnf.fr](http://www.bnf.fr)

Birmingham Library Catalogue <http://libcat.bham.ac.uk>

British History Online [www.british-history.ac.uk](http://www.british-history.ac.uk)

British Library Catalogue <http://catalogue.bl.ac>

Court of Chivalry website [www.court-of-chivalry.bham.ac.uk](http://www.court-of-chivalry.bham.ac.uk)

Early English Books Online <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>

Electronic Thesis Online Service <http://ethos.bl.uk>

English Short Title Catalogue <http://estc.bl.uk>

Ingestre Hall website [www.ingestrehall.co.uk/history](http://www.ingestrehall.co.uk/history)

JStor [www.jstor.org](http://www.jstor.org)

The Marteau Economic History Platform [www.pierre-marteau.com/currency/convertor](http://www.pierre-marteau.com/currency/convertor)

The National Archive, Access to Archives [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/a2a/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/a2a/)

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography [www.oxforddnb.com](http://www.oxforddnb.com)

Oxford English Dictionary Online [www.oed.com](http://www.oed.com)

Royal Horticultural Society Lindley Library Catalogue [www.lindleylibrary.org.uk](http://www.lindleylibrary.org.uk)

The Sutherland Collection [www.sutherlandcollection.org.uk](http://www.sutherlandcollection.org.uk)